

A Comparison of Ballads in Scotland and the Faroe Islands

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STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

I hereby declare that I am the composer of this thesis
and that the work is entirely my own

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ABBREVIATIONS

- CCF Christian Matras, Napoleon Djurhus et al. (eds). 1941-96. *Føroya Kvæði. Corpus Carminum Færoensium*. Compiled by Svend Grundtvig and Jørgen Bloch. 7 vols. Copenhagen.
- Child Francis James Child. 1882-98. *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*. 10 vols. Boston and New York. Sometimes indicated as ESPB in quotations.
- DgF Svend Grundtvig, Axel Olrik, H. Grüner-Nielsen, Erik Dal et al. (eds). [1853-1965] 1966-67. *Danmarks gamle Folkeviser*. 2nd ed. 12 vols. Copenhagen.
- FK V.U. Hammershaimb. [1851-55] 1969. *Færøiske Kvæder*. 2 vols. in 1. Torshaven.
- GD Patrick Shuldham-Shaw, Emily Lyle et al. (eds). 1981-2000. *The Greig-Duncan Folksong Collection*. 8 vols. Aberdeen and Edinburgh.
- ÍFkv Helgason, Jón (ed). 1962-81. *Íslenszk fornkvæði*. 8 vols. Copenhagen.
- SA Sound Archives.
- SSS School of Scottish Studies, University of Edinburgh.
- TSB Bengt R. Jonsson, Svale Solheim, Eva Danielson et al (eds). 1978. *The Types of the Scandinavian Medieval Ballad*. Oslo, Bergen and Tromsø.

ABSTRACT

That Scandinavian ballads are somewhat similar to Scottish ballads is one of the standard beliefs of ballad study. Yet another is that ballads diffuse across geographic and linguistic frontiers. This thesis seeks to examine these tenets in terms of examples from the Faroe Islands and from Scotland. The Faroe Islands are chosen for geographic and linguistic reasons. Although they are a dependency of Denmark, they lie geographically much closer to Scotland. Since they shared a West Scandinavian language with the Scottish islands of Shetland and Orkney for almost a thousand years these islands are considered as a possible cultural bridge between the Scottish and Faroese ballad communities.

The organisation of material is in terms of the history of a shared culture and language with examples of surviving Norn ballad texts from the Shetland Islands and possible parallels in Scotland and Scandinavia; a brief overview of continued contact after the political separation of 1468-69; a comparative history of ballad collection; a summary of ballads deemed to be parallel and a deeper examination of selected ballad pairs. Since the extensive Faroese ballad corpus is little known in Scotland, considerable attention is also given to the different types of Faroese ballads and their function in tradition.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

That the narrative song or ballad has an international presence in Europe in forms that disregard modern state frontiers is a generally accepted fact. Within this framework it is also a generally recognised opinion that the ballads of Scandinavia and Great Britain show greater similarities to each other than they do to those of other nations. The most modern statement of this view is by Bengt Jonsson who began his abstract for a paper entitled *On the Relations Between Scottish and Norwegian Ballads* by saying, "It has since long been recognized that there is a close affinity between British (English and Scottish) and Scandinavian ballads, but most explanations of this fact are rather vague and unsatisfactory..."(Jonsson, 1999).¹ This concept was previously expressed in the works of such varied scholars and writers as Child, Grundtvig, Ker (1904) and Entwhistle (1939). Dal (1956:316-326) in sections concerned with the 'Veje til Norden' [Path to the North], and 'Visernes herkomst og vandring' [The Ballads' origin and wanderings], also discusses the emergence and documentation of the appreciation of the parallelism between British and Scandinavian ballads. Dal, however, gives no details on the mechanics of 'boundary crossing'.

Within this view of the general relationship with Scandinavia, particular notice has been taken of the role of Denmark which has been seen by some as the source of Scandinavian balladry. The reasons for this, as Hildeman pointed out, are that the Danes were the first to record the ballads, have preserved more old manuscripts than any other Nordic group, and "have produced the most important and largest enterprise in the field of Scandinavian balladry" (Hildeman, 1968:xii). This last is, of course, the *Danmarks gamle Folkeviser* begun by Svend Grundtvig in 1853 and completed, under the direction of a number of other editors, in 1965. This work so dominated Scandinavian ballad research in the earlier years of the twentieth century that it also magnified Denmark's role as a source of Scandinavian ballads: Denmark was seen as the possessor of Scandinavia's oldest ballads rather than as the possessor of the area's oldest recorded corpus.

Denmark's oldest written ballad appears to be a variant of DgF 67, "Ridderen i hjorteham" [Knight in stag's disguise] in the Linköping Manuscript. Alisoun Gardner-Medwin describes this as "a compilation of religious prose writings, earlier dated to 1450" but notes that "the handwriting in which the ballad fragment appears is markedly different from that of the surrounding material, and suggests that the ballad was added after the main body of the writings" (Gardner-Medwin, 1976:23). But

Denmark was indeed the first to publish a book of ballads. This took place when Queen Sophia (widow of Frederick II) commissioned Anders Vedel to publish his *It Hundrede Vduaalde Danske Viser* in 1591. At that time, ballad books were very fashionable and many members of the aristocracy and upper-middle class had created their own handwritten versions, noting down items of narrative, lyrical or religious poetry that they wished to collect or to remember.² According to Gardner-Medwin, the earliest of these books still known to us is *Hjertebogen* [The Heart Book] But the best known of these manuscripts is probably the *Karen Brahes Folio* which, along with others similar, Gardner-Medwin describes in some detail (Gardner-Medwin, 1976:23-31).

There was acknowledgement of connections to Denmark, and to the other Scandinavian areas, on both sides of the ocean. For example, an early publication in Scotland was the *Illustrations of Northern Antiquities* by Weber, Jamieson and Scott (1814). This was a book of translations of metrical tales. Grundtvig himself translated and edited 4 volumes of *Engelske og Skotske Folkeviser* (1842-46). Other such works are to be found in the bibliographies offered by Syndergaard (1970:1-29), and in Parker (1952), Brewster (1953) and Gardner-Medwin among others.

In 1955, MacEdward Leach wrote "There is a strong possibility that the Scottish and English ballad was an import from Denmark. Many of the Danish ballads did drift into Scotland" (Leach, 1955:28). But Leach did not explain the vehicle for such drift. Later studies (Riis [1988], Smith [1990] and Lillehammer [1990]) indicated a flourishing trade between Scotland and Scandinavia at least until the early eighteenth century. But, in turn, these studies were not aimed at illustrating methods of cultural transfer. In fact, very few scholars have tackled the problem of the transfer of ballads and song across linguistic boundaries.

There are at least two known, proven cases where texts or motifs, which were later to be transformed into ballads, journeyed across the North Sea. The destination in both cases, however, was Norway, not Denmark, and this forms a part of the rationale for Bengt Jonsson's view of Norway as the birthplace of the Scandinavian ballad (Jonsson, 1989, 1992, 1999). In the first instance, Christophersen notes that Lord Bjarni Erlingsson was in Scotland to defend the interests of the Maid of Norway on her accession to the throne of Scotland after the death of her grandfather, Alexander III. When he returned to Norway, he brought with him a written story concerning Olif, a sister of Charlemagne, and had it translated into the Norse language. It was, basically, the same story as "Sir Aldingar" (Child 59) and is believed by Christophersen to have been one of the sources of that ballad, although the original tale in English is now lost. It does survive, however, in the Icelandic song "Landres Rímur" and in the Faroese

ballad "Ólavu Kvæði".³ It is also observable in the Norwegian romantic saga "Af Frú Olif og Landres Syni Hennar" ("Karlagnús Saga" part 1) (Christophersen, 1952:36-7).

According to Leach (1921:199-226), the other instance is the import into Norway of French *courtois* literature. The destination was actually the court of Håkon Håkonsson (1217-63) at Bergen and the route (at least of the "Breton Lays") is believed to have been through Norman England and a cleric possibly named Brother (or Abbot) Robert. These imports were translated into Norse prose.⁴ About the year 1300, political events brought the flight of Danish and Swedish aristocrats to Norway which created a pan-Scandinavian cultural group. The Swedish Duke, Erik Magnusson (d. 1318), married the Norwegian princess Ingebjörg. To celebrate the occasion, her mother (the North German Duchess Euphemia) ordered the writing of three literary works in Swedish. Thus were composed – in rhymed couplets – "Herr Ivan Lejonriddaren" (1301), "Hertig Fredrik av Normandie" (1308) and "Flores och Blanzeflor" (1312) (Jonsson, 1991:153). The first of these is readily identifiable as "Yvain, Knight of the Lion" by Chrétien de Troyes. Ballads were later to spring from these romances. Here we have one method of transmission, namely, a written text and a commissioned translation. And we are able to prove it by reference to the original manuscripts. But such manuscripts rarely exist and other methods must be sought to prove migrations or analogues.

Some scholars with interests in linguistics (e.g. Nathan Rose), have started to approach this in terms of 'idiolects' – dialects within our ability to comprehend them. Rose starts with the assumption that ballad transmission is a memorial function rather than one of recreative composition. He feels that ballad language is a specialised form of speech and, as such, affects the dialect of the singer as well as vice versa (Rose, 1995:359). Hamish Henderson has also written on how the features of ballad diction tend to override the particular regional dialects of the singers (Henderson, 1992:51-77). If we substitute the word "language" for the terms "diction" and "dialect", we arrive at a notion concerning bilingual situations noted by both Bennett (1999) and Shields (1971) and considered in Chapter 11.

Holzapfel is another scholar who has approached the problems of cross-boundary ballad transfer while at the same time noting that we can no longer be satisfied with "bald statements" about the number of ballad plots common to Britain and Scandinavia (Holzapfel, 1995:370). Initially, Holzapfel lays out a possible scenario (dealing specifically with a pan-Scandinavian situation):

In all these cases we may presume that the translocation of a ballad variant (and for that matter, the phenomenon of variation itself) was possible on the primary level of the singers and musicians themselves, who lived more or less amid heterogeneous dialects within multicultural language areas, but basically under the same linguistic communication conditions. There was no fundamental linguistic border, and the diffusion of balladry occurred, one could say, on the first level of elementary singing activities, namely the performance itself. I know that it would not be opportune to discuss more extensively what I mean by this, because we really know very little about the conditions of such a diffusion: travelling musicians, migrant populations, visiting a market in another town, marriage abroad, and so on. Any of these conditions might bring a change to, or addition to, a traditional and individual song repertory. (Holzapfel, 1995:369)

This is, in fact an idealised stereotype and Holzapfel's observation after this exposition is that it deals with dissemination within the same [basic] language area and with similar conditions for performance. He does recognise that, in other cases, there is a "possibility of very highly complex patterns in ballad migration" (Holzapfel, 1995:370-71). In spite of the difficulties entailed. Holzapfel does suggest an outline of how such a study might be conducted:

One way out of this obvious dilemma [of attempting to define "translation" of style, or "influence"] may be to attempt a more precise identification of the facts of crossing the borderline. We may try to analyze every single ballad type with its international parallels according to at least four possible steps: first, source and result of an obvious translation; second, the treatment of a foreign source; third, the relationship of several motifs or themes; and finally, the unspecified "parallel" of a similar theme, though with obviously independent texts (cf. my short treatment of German and Scandinavian ballad types in Holzapfel 1976). The first step would exemplify the continuation of the same line of tradition, whereas the last would imply no coherence on the level of transmission. But in all cases up to the present we speak primarily in vague terms about "parallels" or "European ballad motives" or whatever else we happen to call it. This task does not seem to provide an easy answer: we have to discuss every single ballad with its sources and individual tradition, and even afterwards there may be no facts from which to generalize. In reality, ballad transmission across linguistic and cultural boundaries is only as specific as all possible translations, on one hand, and paraphrases, on the other. There is no romantic "ballad-wandering" from mouth to mouth, and, indeed, this is not the level we have to examine in order to find any cultural unity for a European ballad genre. (Holzapfel, 1995:371)

This approach is, in fact, the impossible ideal I might have had in mind when I began this project. I do share Holzapfel's view that there is probably no such general thing as an *Urform* (with perhaps some exceptions such as those noted above). I suspect that it is more likely to be motifs that have crossed boundaries and been interpreted and expressed in terms of local conditions.

I have chosen to compare the ballads of Scotland and the Faroe Islands for two specific reasons. Firstly, the Faroese ballads have seldom been studied, almost no translations are available and there is remarkably little discussion material printed in the English language; thus the ballads have acquired an attractive air of mystery. Secondly, the countries are neighbouring territories which, until relatively recently shared a porous language border that might have permitted the passage of motifs and their expression in similar terms – or at least exposed some other influences on the ballad traditions. The outline of the thesis is to present an initial historical-geographical section in Chapter 2 on the sharing of a common West-Scandinavian culture in the Faroes and in parts of Scotland (specifically in the Shetland Islands). Chapter 3 then concerns an analysis of a particular West-Scandinavian ballad found in Shetland. Chapter 4 lays out a brief history of continued inter-area contacts that might have facilitated the exchange of ideas. Chapter 5 is a comparative history of ballad collection in the areas concerned, while Chapter 6 lists, and briefly summarises, the corpus of ballads judged by scholars to be analogous. Chapters 7-10 then deal with (full) comparisons of specific ballad pairs and simple conclusions are drawn in Chapter 11.

NOTES

¹ This paper was to be delivered at the 29th International Ballad Conference in Aberdeen, 9-15th August, 1999 but, due to illness, the author was unable to attend.

² Cf. the ballad books belonging to Shetland Island singers and viewed by ethno-musicologists in the twentieth century (see Chapter 5).

³ But another ballad, "Roysningur" (CCF 166) is now accepted as the analogue to "Sir Aldingar" – see Chapter 6.

⁴ The translations are extant in the *Strengleikur* or *Ljóðabok* [Book of Lays] – a manuscript written about 1250 and now preserved in the Library of the University of Uppsala.

CHAPTER 2

The West-Scandinavian common ballad culture in the Faroe Islands and in Scotland

Scotland and the Faroe Islands are neighbouring lands. The northernmost Scottish islands (the Shetlands) and the Faroes are particularly close and shared a common West-Scandinavian culture for many centuries. While the Faroe Islands have retained their Scandinavian heritage, the same is not fully true for Scotland. Yet ballad remnants in Scandinavian form and language were still to be found in Shetland one thousand years after the Norse settlement. I hope to show in the next three chapters that Shetland provided a linguistic and cultural bridge which might have provided an easier passage of Scandinavian (and particularly Faroese) ballads into Scotland or vice versa.

This chapter is in two parts. The first part involves study of a complex interweaving of the historical and cultural backgrounds in the two areas. The second part is an analysis of Scandinavian ballad remnants in Shetland and a comparison with Faroese and / or other Scandinavian parallels.

The historical and cultural backgrounds

The Faroe Islands, Scotland's neighbours in the northern seas, are *terra incognita* to most people in Scotland. Even for those who know where the islands are, access is difficult and involves a ferry journey over rough, open ocean in uncertain weather or expensive aeroplane flights with inconvenient timetables. The Faroes consist of 17 inhabited islands between the latitudes of 60 and 61 degrees North in the North Atlantic Ocean about 200 miles to the northwest of the Shetland Islands (see Figure 2.1). The land is a steeply tilted, volcanic tableland, relatively unsuited to arable farming although the climate is more temperate than that of neighbouring Iceland. The most similar land forms in Scotland are Hirte in the St. Kilda Islands and Foula in Shetland (Harman, 1997, Jackson, 1991, Williamson, 1970). As in neighbouring Shetland, there are, and historically were, no trees so both areas looked to Norway for lumber. The surrounding ocean, while infamously rough, is rich in fish. It is this ocean that has protected the islands and their culture from frequent invasion and it is

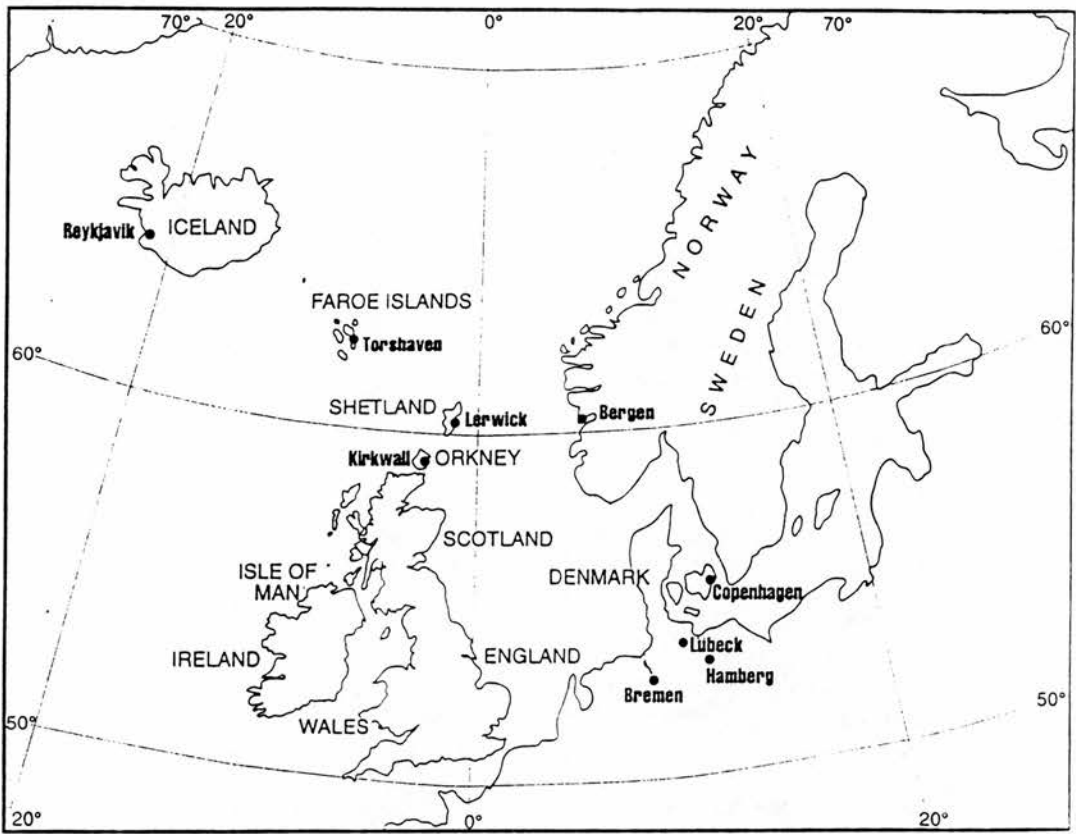


Figure 2.1 Map of North Atlantic

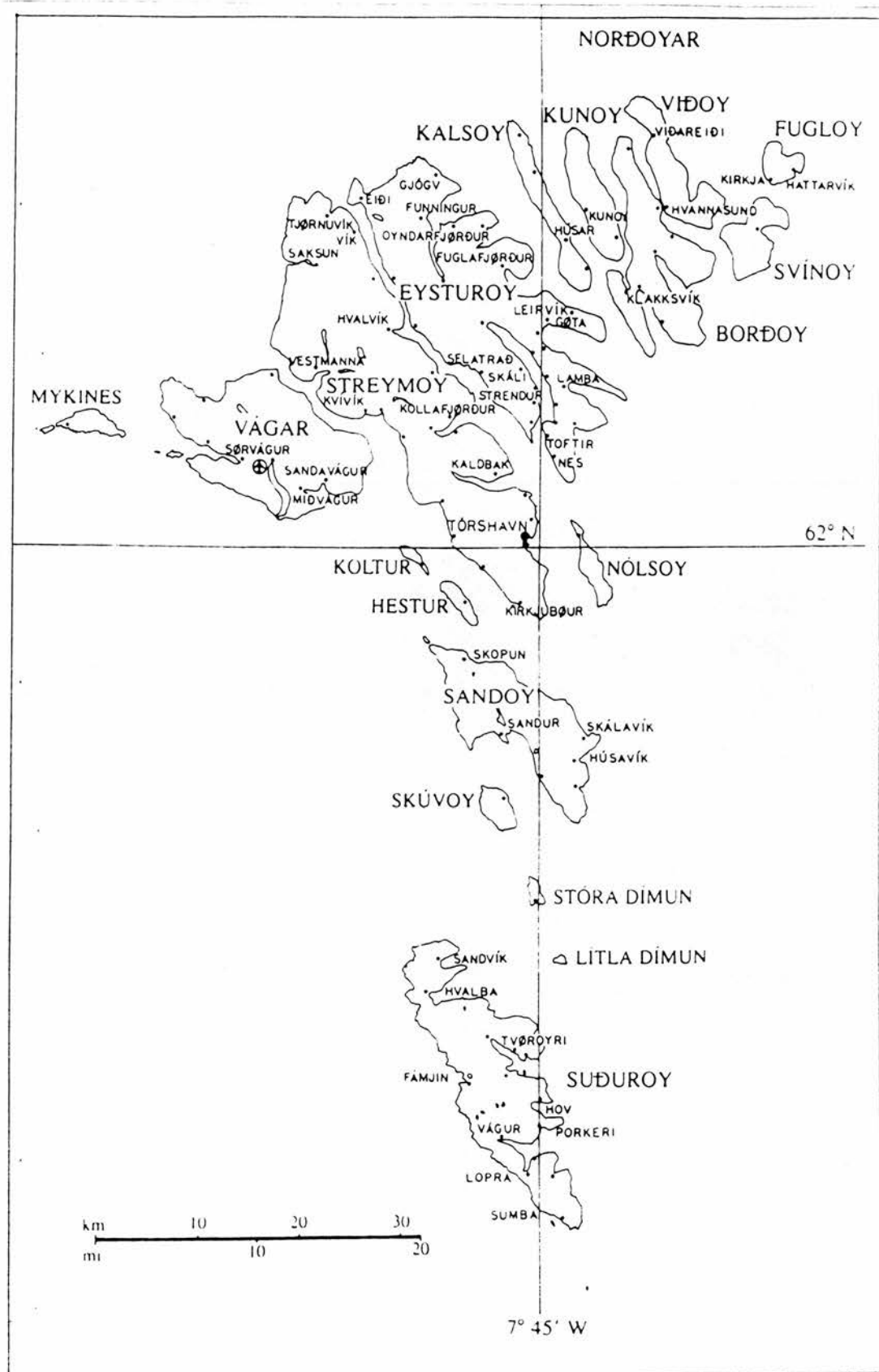


Figure 2.2 The Faroe Islands (Wylie, 1987:14)

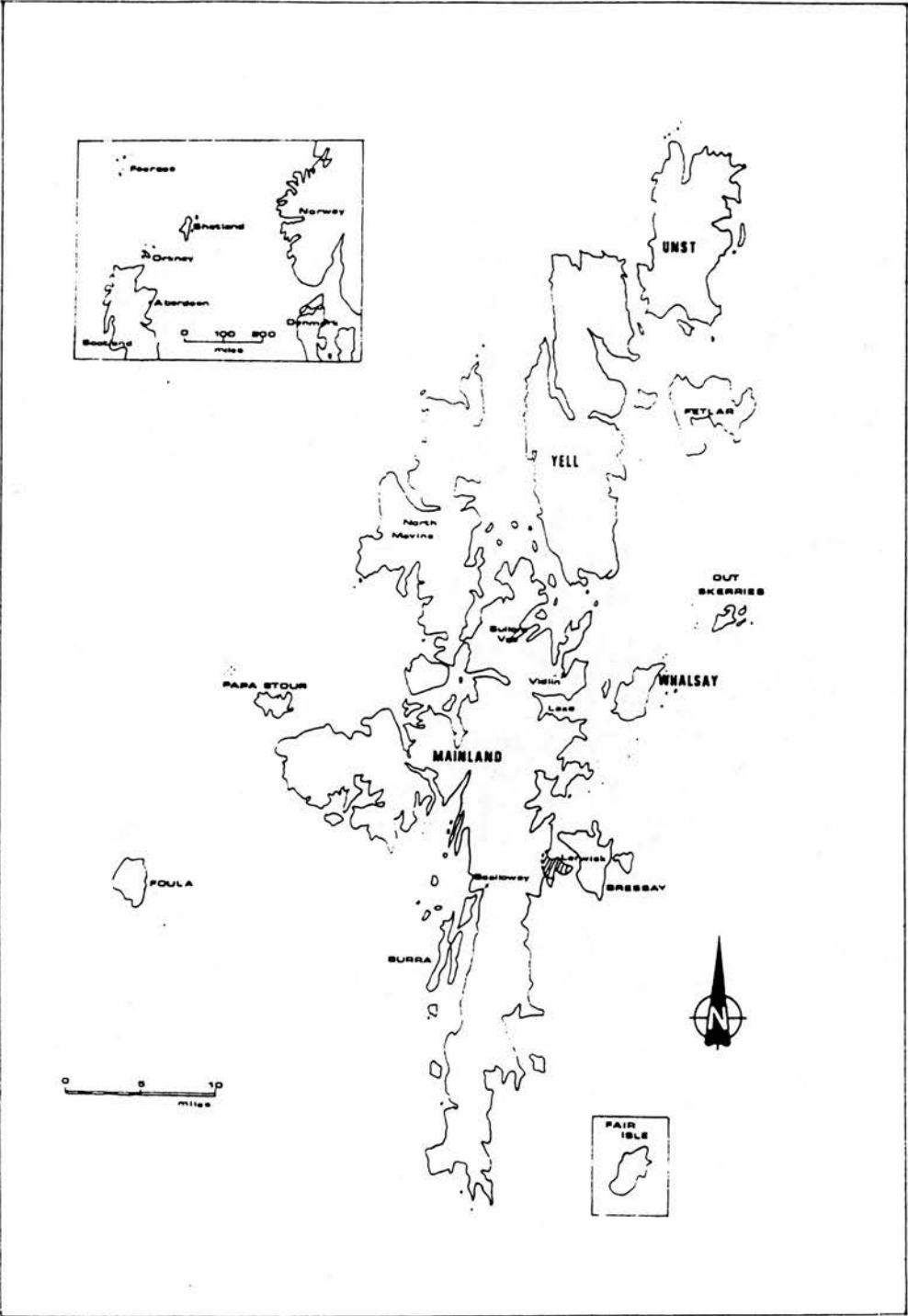


Figure 2.2 The Shetland Islands (Cohen, 1987:x)

the availability of fish that has brought frequent contacts with the rest of Europe. Indeed, the Faroes have not been as isolated as their geographic position would seem to suggest.

Both the Faroe Islands and the Shetland Islands were subject to invasion from Norway from the eighth century on. Those settlers who came to the Faroes in the ninth century are said to have found Irish hermits in residence in addition to sheep similar to those wild sheep found on St. Kilda (hence the "Faroes" name which can be translated as the "Sheep Islands"). Documentary support for this claim exists in the writings of an Irish monk named Dicuil. In 825, he wrote a description of a group of islands at two days' sailing distance to the north where Irish monks had been settled for a hundred years. These islands were described as being divided by narrow channels and full of sea birds and sheep. The settlement was described as having been ended by the arrival of Norse 'pirates' (Tierney, 1967). Scientific indications of the probable truth of this early settlement claim were forthcoming when the paleobotanist Jóhannes Jóhansen found evidence of farming in a pre-Viking settlement level in the Faroese village of Tjørnuvík (Jóhansen, 1971). Many of the Faroese settlers in the earliest days would appear to have come from Ireland, the Hebrides or other areas of northern Scotland (Matras, 1958:100). The islands were governed for many centuries from Norway and the language, like Icelandic, belongs to the West Nordic branch of the Scandinavian language family. In 1308, Norway and its colonies (the Faroes, Iceland and the now-Scottish lands of Caithness, Orkney and Shetland) came under the Danish crown. In 1536 the administration passed directly to Denmark and the language of government became Danish, an East Nordic tongue. The Faroese people, however, continued to speak Faroese and maintained their oral culture in that language.

The Norse settlement of the Orkney and Shetland Islands had followed a different path. The nature of the then-native population is not clearly known: some, if not all, were Pictish, and there are indications of Irish priests as in the Faroes. We have no knowledge of their fate.¹ The settlement of all these northern islands was part of the great Norse migration that swept round the British Isles and Ireland – as well as around the rest of Europe. In Scotland itself, the invaders controlled the Western Isles and much of the western coastal area until they were defeated at the Battle of Largs in 1263 and the area was ceded to the crown of Scotland by the Treaty of Perth in 1266. In this same treaty, the only islands not ceded to the Scots King Alexander III were Orkney and Shetland which "were specially reserved to Norway" (Anderson, 1981:lii). Further to the east, the Norse had occupied Caithness and, temporarily, much of Sutherland. The *Orkneyinga Saga* tells us that the Norse (in 875) conquered

as far south as Ekkialsbakki (the river Oykel, which enters the Dornoch Firth via the Kyles of Sutherland at Bonar Bridge). Surviving Norse names (e.g. for non-coastal places such as Embo, Colabol, Skibo, Borrobol, Mudale, Ospisdale etc.) support this claim though it should be noted how few of them are actually indications of settlement (and those near the coast).² Thus the Kyles of Sutherland became the early southern boundary of the Earldom of Orkney (Anderson, 1981:cxii). After the mid-thirteenth century, Norse power was observed to include only the lowland sections of Caithness and the islands of Orkney and Shetland. The Norse aristocratic families were intermarried with, and increasingly hard to distinguish from, similar Scottish families. As the political and cultural boundary was defined further north, so also was the use of the local variant of the West-Scandinavian language, which was to become known as Norn. This word appears to have been used for the first time in an endorsement, drawn up in lowland Scots, of a text in Norwegian coming from the parliament in Bergen in 1485 concerning certain land properties in Shetland (Renaud, 1992: 217). By the fifteenth century only the Orkney and Shetland Islands remained to the kingdom of Denmark-Norway. Both island groups were transferred to Scottish control when they were impignorated (mortgaged) in 1468-69 for the dowry of Princess Margaret of Denmark, daughter of King Christian I, when she married King James III.

Long before that, however, Orkney and Shetland had begun to follow different cultural paths. Shetland had been detached from the earldom of Orkney in 1195 and was ruled directly by the crown. Orkney, on the other hand, remained as an earldom in its own right. When the direct line of Norse earls died out in 1231, Alexander III granted the Earldom of Caithness to Magnus, second son of the Earl of Angus. He was then made Earl of Orkney by the King of Norway. The five earls in the Angus line were succeeded by Malise, Earl of Stratherne, son-in-law of the last Angus earl. The Stratherne line ended in 1379 when Henry St. Clair of Roslin (son-in-law of the last Stratherne earl) became Earl of Orkney and also Lord of Shetland. In 1471, the Scottish King James III reserved the earldom to the crown and gave the Sinclair family the lands at Ravenscraig in Fife as recompense (Anderson, 1981:xxlvi, lv, lxi, lxxi). The Earls of Angus and Stratherne were Gaelic-speaking and this added another, different linguistic strand in Orkney (Marwick, 1929:xx).

Due to fires and feuds, only a very few early Scandinavian language documents have survived in Orkney. Those that do exist appear to show no 'specifically Orcadian forms' that would distinguish them from the contemporary Shetlandic writings, since they tend to be written in Norwegian – but the evidence is really too slender to provide any proof (Marwick, 1929:xxi). By 1420, the

administration of the islands was in the hands of Thomas Tulloch, a Scottish bishop, and charters and court cases are being written and decided in Scots (Marwick, 1929:xxi-xxiii). The latest extant Orkney document in a Scandinavian language was the statement of grievances written to David Menzies in 1426. Renaud claims that the language in that document is more Danicised as compared to the earlier Norwegian (Renaud, 1992:217). On the other hand, there is mention of a minister of North Ronaldsay who, in 1770, listened to one of his elderly parishioners recite the famous old "Darraðarljóð" [The song of Darrað] in the native Norn (Marwick, 1929:xxvii).³ This song tells how the Valkyries are weaving the fate of the men fighting in the Battle at Clontarf, Ireland in 1014. Eleven stanzas of the poem are preserved in Njál's Saga. The text there tells us that Dorrud [Darrað] had a vision in Caithness on Good Friday of 1014. Through a window he saw women chanting as they were weaving on a loom. "Men's heads were used in place of weights, and men's intestines for the weft and warp: a sword served as the beater, and the shuttle was an arrow" (Magnusson and Pálsson, 1960:349-351). Renaud claims on linguistic grounds, that this "Darraðarljóð" was written in Orkney (Renaud, 1992:191).⁴ Sadly we have no record of that Norn text. In the language itself, we have only the words of an Orcadian version of "The Lord's Prayer" (and several riddles) (Olsen, 1932:145-46). This is not sufficient source material on which to build an analysis of the Norn language or to distinguish the dialects of Orkney from those of Shetland (Barnes, 1998:18). In addition, the fact that Jakobsen did his research in Shetland rather than on one of the Orkney Islands meant that it was Shetland that became the focus of the interest in Norn.

In Shetland, few, if any, changes were made before the 1560s because it was generally expected that the islands would be redeemed by the payment of the sum due. However, although some movement towards redemption was made, this did not happen and Scottish sovereignty was confirmed. This was probably an exercise in *realpolitik* since it was unlikely that the Scandinavians could have continued to control distant islands whose aristocracy were intermarried with noble Scottish families and owed fealty to the King of Scots for estates on mainland Scotland. Surrender of sovereignty did not entail surrender of property rights, however, and the so-called "Lords of Norway" continued to own estates in Shetland. In 1584, the King of Denmark acquired one of these estates and there is documentary evidence of its subsequent leasing arrangements (Ballantyne and Smith, 1994:xvi). Legal responsibility for the islands was handed, in 1565, to Robert Stewart (illegitimate son of James V) who was created Earl of Orkney and Lord of Shetland. Under Earl Robert and his succeeding son, Patrick, some changes in law and property ownership

took place. Earl Patrick was finally removed from office in 1609 and, in 1611, Shetland was fully integrated into Scotland and Scots law and statutes were legally applied. The Acts of Privy Council of Scotland discharging foreign laws in Orkney and Shetland (28th May, 1611) are quite clear:

[The Acts] ordanit that all and sindrie the subjectis of this kingdome sould lieve and be governit under the lawis and statutis of this realme allanarlie, and be no law of foreyne countreyis Thairfoir the lordis of secreit counsaill has dischargit... the saidis foreyne lawis, ordaning the same to be no forder usit within the saidis cuntreyis of Orknay and Yetland at ony tyme heirafter;.. (Ballantyne and Smith, 1994:261).

The latest date we have for a Shetland document written in a Scandinavian language is 1607 (cf. Orkney, 1426) and it is written in Danish (Renaud, 1992:217). The use of Norn, the local variant of the old West Scandinavian language without any observable Celtic or non-Celtic substratum, however, lingered on (Barnes, 1998:9). The expectation that the Scandinavian crown would redeem the pledge lands was the earliest factor encouraging the native islanders to cling to their Norse heritage. After that it lingered as one language among others used in the islands. The *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae* noted that, in 1539, a priest, who had been transferred from the ministry in Yell to the parish of Unst, Baliasta and Lund, went to Norway to learn the language because his congregation could understand no other (Scott, 1928:298).⁵ But the use of the old language was pushed ever northwards by the use of the lowland Scots-English of the settlers and by the conscious language choice of the original inhabitants. Thomas Gifford of Busta (Shetland) wrote in 1733 that everyone spoke English with a good accent but that many still spoke Norn among themselves (Gifford, 1879:31-2). Another major language spoken in Shetland during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was Dutch (Gifford, 1786:28). This was because of the perceived advantage this gave the locals in their trading with the enormous fishing fleets from the low countries (see Chapter 4). In the eighteenth century, we know very little about the remains of Norn in Orkney, but we do know that a considerable amount remained in Shetland (see below). Smith has estimated that Norn was the language of the people until the language balance began to shift in the late seventeenth century: "By the early years of the eighteenth century, however, Norn was on the way out: not because of oppression, but because the Shetlanders, especially younger Shetlanders, chose not to speak it. They turned their attention elsewhere. It's as simple as that." (Smith, 1996:35).

Shetland, that part of Scotland which had been the home of a West-Scandinavian language and culture until this relatively late date, now turned more

towards Scotland. Contacts with Scandinavia certainly remained but the previous focus on the Northlands was diminished. Fewer people continued to sing the old songs for, as Robertson elegantly pointed out in regards to the songs and ballads:

The old words could seldom be translated into the new words and idioms without spoiling the metre and rhyme, and in their old form they became a burden to the memory and hard to understand. Many more have departed with the legends, superstitions and social usages to which they were linked, and with the decay of that spirit which gave them birth and called for them. (Robertson, 1957:3)

But they did not disappear completely without trace. George Low, an early traveller, gave an account of his 1773 journey in which he noted that most of the remaining Norn fragments still in circulation were "old historical Ballads and Romances, this kind of poetry being more greedily swallowed and retentively preserved by memory than any others, and most fitted to the genius of the Northerns." (Low, 1879:107) Low then goes on to quote one of his informants, William Henry, a farmer in Guttorm, Foula (see Figure 2.3), who was, according to Hibbert, the last surviving person able to recite one of the old, historic ballads (Hibbert, 1891:561):

This man has the most knowledge of any I found. He spoke of three kinds of poetry used in Norn and repeated or sung by the old men: the Ballad (or Romance, I suppose); the Vysic or Vyse, now commonly sung to dances, and the simple song. By the account he gave of the matter, the first seems to have been valued chiefly for its subject and was commonly repeated in winter by the fireside; the second seems to have been used in publick (sic) meetings, now only sung to the dance; the third at both. (Low, 1879:107)

I would suggest that what the informant called the "Ballad (or Romance)" would very likely refer to the older ballads which told lengthy tales of misdeeds and revenge. The "Vysic or Vyse" (or Viseck) would, in turn, be somewhat shorter and more similar to the Danish or Norwegian *vise* and the international ballads. The songs, presumably, were even shorter or on a less serious subject.

What is noticeable about this categorisation is the role of content in combination with function both rolled in the guise of form. In contrast to this, Conroy describes Faroese ballads in terms of four groups according to origin (Conroy, 1974:30-31). In her analysis of Faroese ballad singing as it is known to have existed in the nineteenth century, however, the concentration is on function. Conroy posits three distinct functional categories.

The most important of these was the public use in the ballad dance where the singer had (initially) to compete for attention, sing without error and at great length, accommodate the vocal range of those joining in the refrain, coordinate the rhythm of

the song and the dance as well as "dramatize the action of the dance by modifying the tempo of the dance and by making appropriate gestures." (Conroy, 1974:32-4) We have little to indicate the Shetland manner of performing this ancient form of ring or chain dance whose sole musical accompaniment is provided by a lead singer who sings or chants a ballad at the same time he dances the lead. There is an assumption that the Shetland performance was close, or identical, to the Faroese but the only written description appears to be that of Hibbert: "[the Shetland men and women] would take each other by the hand, and while one of them sang a Norn viseck, they would perform a circular dance, their steps continually changing with the tune" (see below) (Hibbert, 1891:563).

Conroy's second division corresponds to the use "in winter by the fireside". In the Faroe Islands, this involved singing at the *kvøldseta* (evening period) by the fireside while wool was carded, spun or knitted. At this time:

members of the household told stories to each other, posed riddles, and sang ballads, especially those ballads that were "owned" by that family. The ballad was sung to a seated, listening audience, so that the singer need not concern himself with the rhythm and the drama of the dance. Usually the singer shortened the long Faroese ballad refrain or omitted it altogether, probably because it was monotonous and intrusive to the passive listening audience and unnecessarily tiring for him. (Conroy, 1974:36) ⁶

Low, in his description quoted above mentions the fact that ballads were "repeated in winter by the fireside" in Shetland (Low, 1879:107).

The third function of the nineteenth century Faroese ballad in Conroy's analysis was the practice song, which was sung to himself when the singer was alone. He would then sing for the joy of singing but also "to practise the ballads that he knew or was in the process of learning." (Conroy, 1974:37) There is no reference in Low's account to such private singing but it is quite probable that similar solo practice sessions also happened in Shetland. That there is no such record might be explained by the fact that such singing would stop at the approach of a stranger (or even of a friend). Also, those who were aware that it happened would not consider it anything out of the ordinary or worth noting.

Other scholars have preferred to base their analysis on form. Thorkild Knudsen, for example, believed that ballads had two distinct forms in the Faroes, the first form being used as the accompaniment for the ballad dance and the second as entertainment or work song (in a manner similar to the Scottish-Gaelic waulking song). He contended that Danish ballads were shorter than their Faroese counterparts because the Danish ballad dance had earlier been replaced by other dance forms and

only the worksong format of the ballad had survived (Knudsen, 1962; Andreassen, 1979:39). As Knudsen had turned to the Faroe Islands - "En håndfuld små klippeøer i det nordatlantiske hav" [A handful of small, rocky islands in the North Atlantic Ocean] - to support his claim, Andreassen refuted the contention from the same base (Andreassen, 1979:39). He pointed out that there is no "work-song" form of the ballads. The form sung of a work evening is not radically changed from the ballad dance form; it is merely lacking most of the burden and may include only part of the standard text (Andreassen, 1979:40-49).

By 1822, Samuel Hibbert commented on the disappearance of the round dance in Shetland (its last stronghold in Scotland) and the loss of the accompanying "Visecks" (ballads):

It was not many years before Mr. Low's visit to Shetland in the year 1774, that numerous songs, under the name of Visecks, formed the accompaniment to dances that would amuse a festal party during the long winter's evening. [After much eating and drinking...] when the *gue*, an ancient two-stringed violin of the country, was aiding the conviviality of Yule, then would a number of the happy sons and daughters of Hialtland [Shetland] take each other by the hand, and while one of them sang a Norn viseck, they would perform a circular dance, their steps continually changing with the tune. In the middle of the last century, little of the Norwegian language remained in the country, and these visecks being soon lost, they were followed, as a clergyman of Unst informed Mr. Low, by playing at cards all night, by drinking Hamburgh waters, and by Scotch dances. The reel, upon being introduced, became highly popular, and a few original melodies adapted to it, were composed by native musicians of Shetland, the most popular of which was the Foula Reel. To this tune a song was afterwards adapted, named the "Shaalds of Foula", bearing allusion to a profitable fishery for cod that was long conducted upon those shaalds or shoals. (Hibbert, 1891:563)

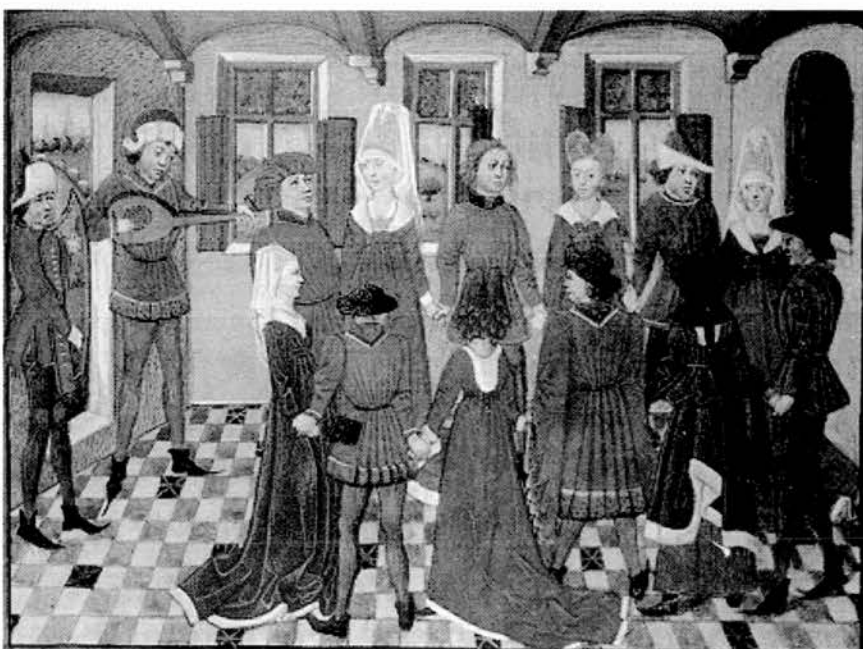
The Shetland circular dance that was thus described by Hibbert is the local variant of the chain or circle dance known throughout western Europe in the medieval period (Wylie and Margolin, 1981:12). Local preferences or conditions dictated whether or not the chain be closed to a ring. Illustrations of this dance are to be found in medieval art works and books (see Figure 2.4).

The dance generally died out as it was replaced by others when fashion and culture changed, but it is, perhaps, not fully appreciated that even a hundred years ago ballad dancing was still in existence in areas other than the Faroe Islands. Nolsøe quotes the Faroese poet Hans Andreas Djurhuss' surprise at seeing French fishermen dancing to French ballads at the East Icelandic harbour-village of Siglufjord in 1898. Djurhuss also noted that many of their steps were what the Faroese called "old



CHAÎNE OUVERTE (XVème siècle)

Open Chain. From the 15th Century *Missel de Poitiers* (Wéry, 1992:81)



DANSE EN CHAÎNE FERMÉE (XVème siècle)

Closed Chain. From a 15th Century Ms. in the National Library, Paris. (Wéry, 1992:310)

Figure 2.4 Medieval Chain Dances

fashioned". Further questioning by Djurhuss had brought to light the fact that the Frenchmen considered the ballad dance to be French and that it had been danced for hundreds of years in Brittany (Nolsøe, 1982:43).

Although Norway and Sweden have attempted to re-introduce the ballad dance as part of folk revivals (see Espeland, 1994 and Ramsten, 1994) the Faroe Islands are the last surviving bastion of an unbroken tradition. Conroy described the condition of ballad dancing in 1974 as essentially in decay but with promise of renaissance (Conroy, 1974:45). (A view of the situation a decade later is given below.) Conroy does, however, give sufficient description of how it was in the nineteenth century for us to glimpse what was lost in Shetland. The simple steps are noted – two to the left and one to the right (though these are simpler than in the more distant past) – as they are executed by dancers linked arm-in-arm. They move clockwise to the rhythm of a ballad sung by a dance leader who is usually male.⁷ An illustration of Faroese ballad dancing is shown in Figure 2.5..

The leader traditionally sang the verses and the other dancers generally joined in the refrain that was usually sung between each verse. Since some ballads may be longer than 200 stanzas (e.g. "Grímur á Bretlandi", CCF 53B has 220 stanzas), each dance may last for some considerable length of time. At the end of a dance, there was often a small competition to see who would be the lead singer for the next dance.⁸ This was accomplished by having more than one singer lead off a short string of dancers on the floor until it was obvious that one had gained the greatest immediate support of joining dancers. By 1974, however, the preference of the younger generation for couple dancing had led to a contraction in the extent of repertoire and the diminishing of the role of the individual lead-singer. This position may now be filled by a small team of singers who decide in advance what ballad will be sung, how it will be performed and how it might be shared between singers. Since there is ballad dancing on fewer and fewer occasions, dance enthusiasts tend to travel to dances rather than remain in their own communities. Thus the variations between the traditions and texts of different villages are lost (Conroy, 1974:32-42).

Conroy focussed on text and included few references to the musical settings of the words. She chose to study the community of Sumba on the island of Suðuroy because of the remaining strength of the tradition in that area. But that particular community was already noted in 1847 by Hammershaimb as being different from other communities in the Faroes. The people sang well and put expression into their dancing. They were also known for retaining two different steps for use in the Round Dance – the *stígingar stev* [walking verse] and the faster *trókingar stev* [tripping verse] (Hammershaimb, 1846-48:258-67).



Figure 2.5 The Faroese Ballad Dance

Other writers have been less favourably impressed by the ballad dances. Norah Chadwick felt that they were "gradually losing their original character, while the ballads are often long and unwieldy, sometimes as in the ballad of *Ívint Herintson*, running to five divisions (*tættir*) and over three hundred and fifty verses" (Chadwick, 1921:157). In fact, Chadwick felt that, except for Sumbø [Sumba], the ballad dance had become a one-speed, solemn and joyless affair (Chadwick, 1921:160).

What Chadwick does give us, however, is a rare description of the music and I quote this at length, even if it does include several observations involving Chadwick's personal views with which I might not agree:

The verses are frequently chanted in a solemn recitative, while the ballad tunes tend to be confined chiefly to the refrains. The method of supplying the melody, however, is subject to almost endless variation. Sometimes old native folk tunes are attached to special ballads, e.g. in the case of *Vi hugged mid kaarde*; sometimes native ballads are sung to Danish folk melodies and refrains as, e.g. *Grindevisen*, sung to the tune of the Danish *Burmand holder i Fjælet ut*. Sometimes in the Faroese repertoire, Norse ballads are found complete with their own melodies, e.g. *Sømandsviserne*, or sung to Danish folk-tunes, e.g. *Zinklers Vise*. Most curious of all is the method not infrequently resorted to in modern times of singing native ballads, often of modern origin, to the tunes of the Protestant Psalmsody – a custom which may have had its origin in the common practice of singing both ballads and psalms on all momentous occasions, such as on the night of a wedding, or before starting on a big fishing expedition. The islanders have little idea of tone or melody and do not sing well; and eye witnesses of some of the ballad dances at Thorshaven aver that the tunes sound less like dance music than melancholy dirges. In *Folkesangen paa Færøerne* (*Færøske Kvadmelodier*), p. 85-140, Thuren has published a large number of original ballad tunes. The characteristic motifs of folk tunes are traceable throughout, as well as their elusive qualities. Thus we find, side by side with airs based on the ordinary major and minor scales, others which, like medieval church music, are based on a 'modal' or 'gapped' tonal system. Indeed traces of the pentatonic scale are not infrequently met with, especially in the tunes attached to the earlier ballads. The majority of Faroese melodies, however, have only one gap and have more in common with the system of notation found in Gregorian music than with the pentatonic scale of many Hebridean lays. A further characteristic of folk music which appears in most Faroese airs is the curious form of close which rarely occurs on the tonic. Not infrequently the theme ends on the leading note or supertonic which strikes the ear with a perpetual surprise, the cadence leading one to anticipate a repetition rather than a conclusion of the air. The reason is that these tunes, like many folk songs from Somerset, the Appalachians and the Hebrides, were 'circular' that is formed for continuous repetition to suit the lengthy nature of the songs and ballads. (Chadwick, 1921:157-59)

I now return to the consideration of the history of the ballad dance in the Faroe Islands. A decade after Conroy had looked for a renaissance, Séan Galvin in 1986

found a stability in the ballad dance that might be seen as a balancing act between the old and the new. As political and social background, Galvin describes how the British occupation of the Faroe Islands during the World War (1939-1945) had affected society there. The number of troops was such that they formed more than one fifth of the combined populations. The contemporary music and dance provided for military entertainment was attractive to younger Faroese and especially to those who had been exposed to jazz or other music of the 1930s. After the war, it was found that ballad dancing, which had suffered during the temperance and evangelical religious movements in the earlier years of the century, was now threatened by the airport and the roads constructed by the troops. People were no longer limited to their own village: they could choose the type and place of their entertainment and it was unlikely to be the ballad dance.

At the same time, however, the Faroes were seeking a political accommodation with Denmark that would permit a maximum amount of autonomy. The political outlook was uncertain but Galvin points out that it was a cultural fact that "the ballad dance retained its symbolic position as one of the purest manifestations of national identity." (Galvin, 1994:83) One is reminded again of the role of the ballad in the initial stirrings of cultural nationalism in the mid-nineteenth century. The desire to find social equilibrium, as Galvin saw it, was the reason for the founding of the dance societies of which the 'Havner Dansifelag' (1952) was the first. Galvin also notes how the societies have changed the nature of the ballad itself:

In today's [1986] Faroe Islands there are thirteen formal, dues paying dancing organizations called *Dansifeløg*. Certainly they are dedicated, interested and proud of their ballad tradition and are careful to help preserve the place of the dance within the larger societal structure, but these groups only correspond to a small percentage of the total population. Furthermore, the members of the dancing societies most often learn the ballads by memorizing a printed text rather than by oral means, as they once did - thereby allowing print medium to "set" the words permanently and to discourage variant texts. (Galvin, 1994:84)

This is an extension of Conroy's dismay at the creation of composite texts: now the texts are frozen and cut off from the variation that marks a living tradition. Galvin, however, also notes the re-emergence of the *Tættir*. This word was previously applied either to a section of a ballad or to a shorter, satirical song. In its latter meaning, it is again popular and newly written, anonymous *Tættir* are to be heard on the radio. For Galvin, this is the continuation of the living ballad tradition albeit in a slightly changed form which meets the current social and economic conditions (Galvin, 1994:86-7).

Many of the comments by Conroy and Galvin are echoed in the reminiscences of a Faroese woman, now resident in Scotland, and much of what Galvin wrote was within her personal experience. She remembers that it was during the war that the "English Dancing" came into fashion in the Faroes. It was held in the NAAFI's [Navy, Army and Air Force Institutes – canteens for servicemen] where they would have bands or records to play. The servicemen invited the local girls and the local young men tended "to be left out in the cold".

A further wartime memory, however, makes it clear how deeply ingrained the role of the ballad dance was in the Faroese character. My informant was in school when the area was subjected to German air-raids. She remembers how all the children were crowded into the basement for shelter. There they danced and my informant said it was "quite exciting". It was not organised by the teachers but rather by the children themselves. As I was told:

There was a girl who was actually quite good. She was the farmer's daughter in the middle of [a northern village] and she was a very big girl. We were deliberately cut out because we were too small to be dancing and I remember feeling quite hurt. She probably had a good grounding [in singing] because she came from an old family in the village where they no doubt did a lot of that singing, you know, Lutherans and all that, and we did not know anything about it.

The role of the Lutherans in the preservation of the ballad culture is interesting and it is in contrast to the role of the evangelical ["Plymouth Brethren"] religious movement. This came to the Faroes Islands, my informant thought, in the "nineteen teens". Her own family had been closely involved in this and a great-uncle had founded a number of religious assemblies. She is very fond of the old ballads and regrets that she was too young to have experienced the ballad dance in its heyday. "By the time I came along, it was practically banned because of religious influence".⁹ In her family, they did not talk much about ballads for that subject was taboo. "You did not sing ballads because it was sinful, it was equated with drunkenness and that sort of thing and you just did not do it. In fact, I remember an aunt of mine saying to a cousin who was singing something, "Can I hear you [she repeats this in Faroese] singing a ballad?" and he hastily said, "No, no." This attitude was apparently quite different from that of the traditional Lutheran part of the population who held fast to the ballads. When asked whether the Lutherans and the Brethren had lived in separate areas, my informant replied that the two groups were inter-mingled. In this way, the ballad singing tradition continued among some of the people.

Since my informant had said she was cut out of the dancing in the school basement because she was too young, I asked how old one should be to be allowed to go out to ballad dances. The answer was that 14 was the likely age as that was when young people were confirmed in the church and were looked upon as being adult. An additional, appropriate question is, of course, the location of the dances that were held in the dancing season between Christmas and Lent. My informant replied that, at least when she was young, some of the villages had special "huts" for dancing that were called *dansistova* [dancing rooms]. In Torshaven, there were two halls; one was "Thor's Hall" where they danced upstairs as well as downstairs and the other was the "Sjónleikarhúsið" [the Theatre] where they held the regular Saturday evening dances. In the bigger Faroese farms they probably danced in the kitchen / living room. There were often dances at these farms because the farmer tended to be scholarly (or more educated), wealthier and might be a Member of Parliament who "maybe fostered this sort of thing as well – depending on their religion".

My informant also had memories of her relatives who had sung ballads; indeed a number of them had filled the role of *skipari* [song leader in the dance] in their younger days. Foremost amongst those was her grandmother (before she accepted the religious strictures) and her great-aunt and great-uncle, all of whom had been in great demand because of their abilities. I queried the role of a woman as a *skipari* (cf. Conroy above) but my informant assured me that in her area, and at least in this 20th century, it was quite common for a woman to fill this role: if they were good, they were in demand. Other older-generation relatives were also described:

My old uncle who kept himself, in his old age, kept himself amused by sitting quietly singing them [ballads] to himself. He was about 90 and he was a *skipari* when younger. They [the ballads] were obviously still in his mind and that was his way of entertaining himself. I don't know how many ballads he knew. I had a cousin [name], he's dead now, and his wife [name], both *skipari*, they knew 25 thousand stanzas. He knew 10 thousand and she knew 15 thousand. They were quite a lot in demand.

My informant noted that things have changed greatly in the Faroe Islands, everything has become more materialistic and life goes now at a faster pace. As far as the *dansifeløg* are concerned, she says she thinks it was the fear of losing the ballads altogether that brought on this organised form. This is probably very true as the first group was formed in Torshaven in 1952. When I asked who became involved, she replied:

I think you take up ballads if interested ... It tends to be women of a certain age who get into it.. [The families are gone and they look for something to fill up

time?]) Yes, yes and it is a good way to keep fit. But also there are people who are genuinely interested, who do remember the ballads, and I think they set out to remember [them] as well.

She also noted the change in the method of learning. What nowadays is learned by rote from a book was previously "decanted" by chant and repetition at the fireside from the owner of the ballad to the learner. Also, on the records and tapes of modern performances, the *skipari* sings but you can also hear the others singing the verses quite loudly as they pass the microphone. [This happens because, in slightly older recording methods, the microphone is stationary and the ring of dancers pass it one dancer at a time.] "In the old days, it was poor etiquette to lead in somebody else's ballad. You could sing along but not lead".

My informant made it quite clear that the stereotypical slow ring-dance is not the only kind of dance known. That particular stately ring-dance is known as the *Branle*¹⁰ and comes from France but the version danced in Brittany was done at a faster pace. There is also the *Bandadans* where a man and a woman hold the ends of a ribbon while :

[other dancers] go underneath and do all sorts of manœuvres. There are others where the men and the women are in a row and they come up together and go back and they say different things and they're actually quite complicated, some of them, not just going round in a ring.

Appropriate ballads, in mood and tempo, accompany these different dances.

Scandinavian ballad remnants in Shetland

I had turned to the Faroe Islands in the last section to get a glimpse of what had been lost in Shetland in addition to what has survived in the Faroes. The next section considers what survived of Norse culture and Norn language in Shetland and, in the case of ballad remnants, what the Faroese and / or other Scandinavian parallels are.

What we know is essentially through the work of five men: George Low, Marius Hægstad, Michael Barnes, Hugh Marwick and Jakob Jakobsen. George Low journeyed to Shetland from Orkney in 1774 (although his work was not published until 1879) and his observations have been noted on a number of occasions earlier in this chapter. One of his major achievements, however, was the recording and preservation of 35 stanzas of a ballad known as "Hildina-kvadet" (TSB E97) which will be considered in greater detail in Chapter 3.¹¹ Marius Hægstad was a linguist who devoted considerable attention to the understanding of "Hildina-kvadet" and,

indeed, was responsible for giving the ballad the name of its principal character (see Chapter 3). Michael Barnes is a present-day, distinguished linguist who has specialised in various North Atlantic Scandinavian dialects including Faroese and Norn. Hugh Marwick was a native Orcadian dedicated to preserving what he could find of the old language - which he published in his book *The Orkney Norn* (1929). Most important historically (although perhaps not theoretically) was the Faroese Jakob Jakobsen. He was a philologist who went to Shetland in 1893, and remained there for two years recording the Norn remnants. This work was submitted as his doctoral thesis in 1897 and published as *Det norrøne sprog på Shetland*. He had two further brief visits to Shetland in 1905 and 1912 but his major collecting was achieved during his first visit. His other publications, as far as Shetland Norn is concerned, are *The Place Names of Shetland* (1936) and the extraordinary 2 volumes of the *Etymologisk ordbog over et norrøne sprog på Shetland* (1908-21) which was translated and published in 1928-32 as *An Etymological Dictionary of the Norn Language in Shetland*. This listed 10,000 individual words and a great many fragments of Norn (Barnes, 1996:2-3). Unfortunately there is no detailed record of his interviewing technique and the Norn fragments are sometimes without comment (Barnes, 1996:4).

Among these 'fragments' are small pieces of songs and a ballad. Neither Liestøl (the Norwegian folklorist) nor Child mention Norn songs, other than ballads, that survived in Shetland.¹² Jakobsen, however, noted the existence of two lines of a cradle song, some fragments of an eagle song from Foula and a boat song with some varying lines (Jakobsen, 1928, vol. 1:lciv, cxii and cxiii). This last is now known as *The Unst Boat Song* and the following version is fully set out by Robertson:

Starka virna vestalie,
Obadeea, obadeea.
Starka virna vestalie
Obadeea monye.

Strong wind from the West,
Trouble (Annoyance?), Trouble.
Strong wind from the West,
Trouble men.

Atala, stoita, stonga raer;
Oh, whit says du da bunshka baer;
Oh, whit says du da bunshka baer;
Litra mae vee, drengie.

Order, brace the mast, yards,
Do you think the boat will bear/
 carry her sail;
I am pleased with that, boys.

Sain papa wara,
Obadeea, Obadeea,
Saina papa wara,
Obadeea monye

Bless us, our Father,
Trouble, Trouble,
Bless us, our Father,
Trouble men.

(Robertson, 1973:32, including translation).

The entire text of "Hústrú og Bóndi" illustrates what might have been sung in Shetland in the eighteenth century.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Árla var um morgunin,
høsnini tóku at gala,
hústrú vekir upp bónda sín,
biður hann fara at mala. | It was early in the morning,
roosters were starting to crow,
the wife wakes up her husband,
bids him start grinding (corn). |
| 2. Tað var Jógvan stolti,
snippar og hann grætur:
"Skamm fái tín høsn,
ið tíðliga gala um nætur. | It was proud Jógvan,
he cried and lamented,
"Confound your chickens,
that crow so early at night. |
| 3. Annað havi eg heimi at gera,
ganga burtur um haga,
røkta kýr og baka teim
og strúka teim undir maga. | I have other work to do at home,
rather than go off to the outfield,
take care of the cows, fence them
and rub their bellies. |
| 4. Annað havi eg heimi at gera,
enn ganga burtur á fjalli,
røkta kýr og baka teim,
og tita niðan úr hjalli. | I have other work to do at home,
rather than go out to the hill,
take care of the cows, fence them
and walk quickly up from the store. |
| 5. Báði havi eg kirnað,
og feiað havi eg hús,
statt nú upp, kæra hústrú mín,
og nú gerst dagurin ljús! | I have both churned
and swept the house,
get up now, my dear wife
for dawn is breaking. |
| 6. Bádi havi eg kirnað,
og so havi eg kæst,
øll míni húsini
tey standa afturlæst." | I have both churned and
also I have made cheese,
the whole of my house
is locked up." |
| 7. Aldri er so veðrið ilt,
tað regnar undir vegg,
Jógvan nú gongur at hyggja at,
nær húsini hava egg. | The weather is never so bad,
that it rains under the wall,
Jógvan now goes to look if there
are eggs close to the henhouse. |
| 8. Úti standa grannar hans,
halda sær at gaman,
Jógvan gongur um allan bøin,
jagar høsini saman. | His neighbours are standing out
in front enjoying themselves,
Jógvan goes all around the infield
chasing the chickens. |
| 9. Úti standa grannar hans,
halda sær at gleim,
Jógvan gongur um allan bøin,
jaktar høsini heim. | His neighbours are standing out
in front enjoying themselves over it,
Jógvan goes all around the infield
chasing the chickens home |

10. Jógvan leyp í skarndíkið,
hálsin mundi hann brotið:
"Skamm fái tú, reyða toppa,
tað mundi eg av tær notið!"
11. Inn kemur Jógvan stolti,
riðar á sínum beinum:
"Øll so hava høsini vorpið
uttan reyða toppan eina."
12. Inn kemur hon reyða toppan,
vimpar við sínum veli:
"Eymur skalt tú eta tað egg,

eg verpi tær í degi."
13. Jógvan gár till grannkonu sína:
"Selj mær tey eg, tú hevur,
vilt tú ikki trúgva mær,
eg seti mína hond í veður."
14. "Gakk tú tær á oksabás,
har liggja eggini sjei,
eymur skal tín ryggur verða,
tekur tú meiri en tvey!"
15. Tað var Jógvan stolti,
skuldi taka tvey,
tá kom á hann skjálvti,
hann molaði eggini sjei.
16. Tað var jógvan stolti,
skuldi taka salt,
hann reiv niður eitt sótttræ,
spilti so smørið alt.
17. "Hoyr tað, Jógvan stolti,
tvá tú mær um tær,
kemur tú nakað longri upp,
so liggur tær rísið nær.
18. Opnar skalt tú dyrnar halda,
meðan eg gangi inn,
kemur dums í høgdið á mær,
so geldur ryggur tín."
19. Hon sló hann úr ánni,
haðan oman í garð,
har kom prestur gangandi,
og møtti hann honum har.

Jógvan fell onto the midden,
he could have broken his neck
"Confound you, redcrest,
this happened because of you!"

Proud Jógvan comes inside,
shaking on his legs,
"All the hens have laid, except
for redcrest alone."

In comes that red crest,
shaking its tail:
"You will be aching when you eat that
egg
that I'll lay for you today."

Jógvan went to a neighbour wife,
"Sell me those eggs you have,
if you don't believe me,
I'll raise my hand."

"Go to the ox stall,
there are seven eggs there,
your back will be aching,
if you take more than two."

Thus was proud Jógvan
about to take two,
then he was attacked by the shivers,
and broke seven eggs.

Then proud Jógvan was
going to take salt,
He pulled down a 'soot pole',
and thus spoiled all the butter.

"Listen here, proud Jógvan,
wash my toes,
if you come any higher up,
you will be in for it.

You should keep the door open,
till I get inside,
if that dust gets to my head,
your backbone will suffer for it."

She pushed him out of the stream,
from there down to the yard,
there the priest walked up and
he met him there.

- | | | |
|-----|--|---|
| 20. | Tað var Jógvan stolti,
snippar og hann grætur,
tá kom prestur gangandi,
spyr, hví hann so lætur. | It was proud Jógvan,
he cried and lamented,
then the priest walked up and
asked why he was making that noise. |
| 21. | "Eg eigi mær eina ónda konu,
eg kann ikki ráða við henni,
prestur, tak tú maltið og saltið,
les mær yvir henni!" | "I have a wicked wife,
I can't reason with her,
priest, come take malt and salt,
and read an incantation over her for me!" |
| 22. | Presturin tók við malti og salti,
skuldi lesa yvir henni,
hon tók upp ein eikiklepp,
hon sipaði prestin í ennið. | The priest took malt and salt,
would read an incantation over her
she took up an oak-wood block.
and hit the priest on the temple. |
| 23. | Hon tók upp tann eikiklepp
dró hann fram við síðu,
tað var eingin av kongsins monnum,
móti henni tordi at stríða. | She took up an oak-wood block,
held it at her side,
there was not one of the king's men,
would dare to fight her. |

A distant Scottish parallel to this is "The Wife of Auchtermuchty". It is not included in the Child collection which does not give a place to many jocular ballads.¹³ In this Scottish case, however, the role reversal is brought about by the husband because he thought his wife had an easy time of it inside the house while he was out in all weather attending to the farm work. The wife agrees to change places:

Gudeman, quod scho, content am I,
To tak the plewch my day about,
Sae ye rule weil the kaves and ky,
And all the house baith in and out:
And now sen ze haif made the law,
Then gyde all richt and do not break;
They sicker raid that neir did faw,
Therefore let naething be neglect. (Herd, [1769] 1973, 2:126)

Needless to say, the husband fails miserably in his tasks while the wife manages the ploughing. At the end of the day, the husband is forced to admit:

Quoth he, Dame, I sall hald my tung,
For an we fecht I'll get the war,
Quoth he, When I forsuke my plewch,
I trow I but forsuke my skill:
Then I will to my plewch again;
For I and this house will nevir do weil.

It certainly includes a litany of disasters such as: the loss of all the goslings – five to a hawk and the remaining two crushed by the husband, the draining of the cow's milk

by the calves, a fire in the chimney, the fouling of the sheets by the children in bed and the loss of those same sheets carried away by a burn in spate. There is here, however, not the same feel of public shaming that is involved in "Hústrú og Bóndi", nor the role of "henpecked" husband.

The only other possible remnant of a Scotland-Shetland-Scandinavian ballad-bridge is "King Orfeo" (Child 19), which has a debased Norn burden in an otherwise Scots-English text. In 1879, Professor Francis James Child of Harvard University attempted to expand his collection of surviving English and Scottish ballads to include those of the northern islands of Orkney and Shetland. He was unable to visit these islands personally but clearly understood that their unusual cultural heritage, isolated geographic position, and conservative way of life might yield interesting additions to his collection. He was, perhaps, encouraged in this by the knowledge that eight lines of a possible Odinic ballad had recently before that date been discovered in Unst (Lyle, 1977:141). The text of this is:

Nine days he hang	pa de rütless tree;
for ill was da folk,	in' güd wis he.
A blüdy mael	wis in his side –
made wi' a lance –	'ar wid na hide.
Nine lang nichts,	i' da nippin rime,
hang he dare	wi' his naeked limb.
Some, dey leuch;	
but idders gret. (Turville-Petre, 1964:43) ^{1 4}	

As Child wrote to Lowell (the American Minister in London) in 1879

It seems to me they [ballads] must linger there. They spread like Norway rats, and there is plenty of Norway in Orkney and Shetland.. There must be ballads there - how else have the people held out against poverty, cold and darkness. (Lyle, 1977:141)

He attempted to do his research by mail. The direct return to his solicitation was meager indeed and the most important find in the Shetland Islands, the ballad "King Orfeo" (named by Child), was gained from the published collecting efforts of the Rev. Biot Edmonston (Edmonston, 1880) (Child to Grundtvig, 21 March, 1880; Hustvedt, 1930:286). The low number (19) was assigned to the ballad by Child because one of the principles of organisation was to be by age and Grundtvig, who assisted Child with the question of organisation, believed that the 2-line stanza was older than the 4-line form. The ballad is found in no other location, not even on the Canadian periphery where ballads now lost in the homeland have survived along with the descendants of the original immigrants (Doucette and Quigley, 1981).

Child was especially interested in the refrain of which he gathered was used in other songs. He gives no reason for this but it may be inferred from Jakobsen's comment given below. He offers a translation of the first line but asks Grundtvig's assistance for the remainder (Child to Grundtvig, March 21, 1880; Hustvedt, 1930:286).

As I have pointed out elsewhere, the refrain and the attempts at its translation illustrate some of the difficulties in dealing with the Norn language (Fischer, 1993:51-3). Ian Spring, in his article, "Orfeo and Orpheus: Notes on a Shetland Ballad" (1984:43), sets out the variants of the refrain as they appear in the most commonly acknowledged versions. In each case the informant name is followed by publication details of the particular variant.

- | | | |
|--|----------|----------------------------|
| 1. Scowan ürla grün.
Whaur giortan han grün oarlak. | Saxby | Child Ballad No. 19 |
| 2. Scowan orla grona.
Where gurtin grew for Norla. | Gloup | Shuldham-Shaw, 1976:125-26 |
| 3. Scowan earl grey
For yetten kangra norla. | Stickle | Shuldham-Shaw, 1947:75 |
| 4. Sconner le groon
Whar yorten han groon varlee. | Anderson | SSS SA 1955/145/6 |

To these I would add two rarely noticed variants:

- | | | |
|---|------------|--------------------|
| 5. Seng skowin urla gründ
Wheir yortin hen grenorla | Williamson | Johnson, c1971:118 |
| Sko norla gro
For yat in hen grenorla - or-
For yortin in groen orla. | Williamson | Johnson, c1971:118 |
| 6. Scowan örla gröna
Whar gairdens grew green oarla. | Tulloch | SSS SA1974/208 |

and the version noted by Jakob Jakobsen:

- | | | |
|--|--|---------------------|
| 7. Skouan orla gron(a)
Hwar ja'rtan gru gren orla (orlek) - or-
Hwar jarten han gron orla (orlek). | | Jakobsen 1928,1:cxi |
|--|--|---------------------|

Spring (1984:43) notes that, regarding the first four variants, Child and Grundtvig come to the conclusion that the refrain is a corruption of the Scandinavian "Skoven aarlig grøn.....hvor hjorten han gaar aarlig" ("Yearly greens the wood.....where the hart goes yearly"). Axel Olrik, on the other hand, preferred "Skoven (er) herlig grøn.....hvor urten hun grønnes herlig" ("The wood is magnificently green...where the plant grows splendidly green"), or "Skoven herlig grønnes"....("The wood grows splendidly green") (Spring, 1984:50 n.9). Jakobsen, on the other hand, delves deeply into Old Norse to find a source. He felt that the first line, "Skouan orla gron(a)" harked back to the older "Skogrinn....groen" ("the forest...green"). The "orla" might be the Old Norse "arla" ("yearly") – thus, "The forest becomes green yearly". Jakobsen, however, is more inclined to accept that it is an adaptation of the Icelandic "harðla" (very) because the change of "harðla" to "orla" is reasonable and it (harðla) appears in a similar Icelandic refrain line ("hon byr undir skogrinn (-inum) harðla groenn(a)"). In this case, the first line would mean "The forest is very green". The possibilities of the second line are explored equally extensively. The translation "hart" for "jort" was discarded in favour of "plant" from the Old Norse "urt" (Norn commonly prefixed "j" before an Old Norse vowel). The second line then would read "The plant becomes green yearly" – an interpretation closer to Olrik than to Child and Grundtvig. Such are the problems of interpreting Norn ballads (or refrains) and placing them in relation to their Scandinavian cousins.

It is possible to date this ballad ("King Orfeo") back to use in the first decade of the nineteenth century. Laurence Johnson noted that an informant of Laurence Williamson's had told him about a fiddle tune called "Fair and Lucky":

Two fiddlers played at a Delta wedding for a silver fiddlestick, and could play all the same tunes till the Delting man played "Fair and "Lucky, which he had heard as he rested on a knoll coming through. So he won the bow. My informant sung the air and words.

At first he pleid da nots o noy,
And den he pleid da nots o joy,
An den he pleid sik divil
At wid a med a sik hert hil;
We sal gyeng up ita da ha
Deir among da jantri a
Seng Skowin urla grüend,
Wheir yortin hen grenorla.
(Johnson, c1971:118)

Another of Williamson's informants remembered the "oo tegirs" (people who went around asking for spare raw wool) from Unst "singing many more verses of it in Yell in the first decade of this [nineteenth] century" (Johnson, c1971:118). He also

noted alternative second lines for the refrain (which matched those mentioned above) and observed that "Mrs. Saxby gives another version" (Johnson, c1971:118). Mrs. Saxby was the sister of Biot Edmonston who gave a text to Child.

Another fragment was collected by Patrick Shuldham-Shaw in Unst in 1947 from John Stickle. The text in this case was:

Will ye come into our ha'
Scowan earl grey,
Ye will come into our ha',
For yetten kangra norla.

And we'll come in into your ha',
An We'll come in among you a'.
First you played the notes o' noy,
And then you played the notes o' joy.

And then you played a good old gabber reel,
What might ha' made a sick hairt heal. (Shuldham-Shaw, 1947:75)

As Shuldham-Shaw noted in a later article, his identification of this fragment had been by pure chance. He was visiting John Stickle in Baltasund and had sung him a recently collected jingle called the "Hyltadance" and remarked that it was "a curious bit of nonsense" (Shuldham-Shaw, 1976:124). Stickle then volunteered what he called "something every bit as nonsensical" and sang the above text. Shuldham-Shaw recognised it only because he had recently been shown a copy of the text published as "An Old Song" in the August 25, 1894 edition of *The Shetland News*. This text had originally been collected in 1865 by Bruce Sutherland of Turfhouse, North Yell from an oral recital at the Gloup Fishing Station. The greatest thrill, however, was the fact that the rare ballad had now been given a tune (Shuldham-Shaw, 1976:124).

The connections of the Scots-English verse text to the Middle English *Sir Orfeo* and the Middle Scots *King Orphius* (dated to 1585) can not be denied.¹⁵ Thus the Scottish versions of the classical tale have been subject to the same Celtic influences, manifest in motifs, that Brouland observed in *Si Orfeo*.¹⁶ Ballad analogues which exist in Scandinavia (although not in the Faroe Islands) lack these specific motifs and are limited to versions in praise of the power of music, involve a supernatural water being (e.g. DgF 40, *Harpens kraft*), and lack a story line similar to *King Orfeo*. Jakobsen judged that the refrain was left over from a Norn ballad and had been later appended to the Scots *King Orfeo* (Jakobsen, 1928,1:cxi). It is interesting to note that no similar refrain appears in the index of refrains included in CCF 7:133-36.

The role of Shetland as a cultural bridge has attracted the attention of many researchers – although none seem to have developed any theory about the passage of oral culture at language boundaries. C.A. Goodlad mentions that Shetland and Orkney lay at the crossroads of Norse activity in the northern seas. From a starting point in Norway, they lay:

between the main line of movement to Faroe and Iceland and the important routeway to the Celtic west, the Hebrides, Ireland and the Viking kingdom around the Irish Sea. These routeways functioned not only as migration paths but also as lines of exploration and trade. (Goodlad, 1971:51)

Liestøl similarly saw Shetland as a bridge for, after all, it was half-way between the Faroe Islands and Norway:

Hjaltland ligg pålag midvegs millom Stavanger og Færøyane, so det er rimeleg at færøyingane kom innum Hjaltland på ferdene til Sørlandet og Auslandet i Noreg. (Liestøl, 1937:84-5)

[Shetland rises up midway between Stavanger and the Faroe Islands, so it is likely that the Faroese would land there on the journey from the Faroes to southern and eastern parts of Norway.]

He noted that at the end of the thirteenth century, Shetland and the Faroes formed a single judicial district with the presiding judge being resident in Shetland.¹⁷ He noted that persons owned property simultaneously in both places, 'Me ser av gamle brev at folk samstundes hev eigedomer både på Færøyane og på Hjaltland.' (Liestøl, 1937:84). [It is evident to me from old letters that people owned property simultaneously in the Faroes and in Shetland.] He also observed how both areas had intimate trade ties to Bergen where Shetlanders held important positions up until the seventeenth century (see Chapter 4). For Liestøl, the disappearance of the Norn song corpus meant a missing link in the chain of song that bound together the Norse colonies of the North Atlantic:

Folkevisa syner oss Telemark, Agder, Vestlands-fylki, Shetland, Færøyane og i nokon mun Island som eit samanhangande kulturområde. Havet som geografisk kløyver området upp, vert mest om eit innlandshav som bind saman. (Liestøl, 1937:128)

[Ballads show us Telemark, Agder, the Western counties, Shetland, the Faroe Islands and, to some degree, Iceland as a single cultural block. The ocean which divides up the area was really like an inland sea that bound the areas together.]

He then goes on to speculate what the survival of the corpus might have meant to scholars:

Hadde me havt like gode uppteikningar av dei shetlandske folkevisone som av dei færøyske, vilde nok fleire av dei spursmåli som no møter folkevisegranskaren ha fenge eit svar. (Liestøl, 1937:127)

[If we had equally good records of Shetland [Norn] folksongs as we have of the Faroese, many more of the language questions which some ballad researchers encounter would have received an answer.]

Our major record of a Shetland Norn ballad ("Hildina-kvadet") and what it can tell us, is the subject of the next chapter.

NOTES

¹ Another difference between Orkney, Shetland and the Faroes is that the Scottish islands show considerable evidence of prehistoric occupation. This is lacking in the Faroes.

² See Nicolaisen, 1976:93,95 for maps showing distribution of Scandinavian names in *bolstaðr* and *dalr*.

³ Marwick's source for this claim turns out to be a footnote in Sir Walter Scott's *The Pirate* (Note C concerning p.24 and entitled "Norse Fragments"). This says, "Mr. Baikie of Tankerness, a most respectable inhabitant of Kirkwall, and an Orkney proprietor, assured me of the following curious fact:—" and goes on to relate how a clergyman (recently deceased) had read Gray's ode "Fatal Sisters" (an interpretation of the "Darraðarljóð") to his older parishioners because it was a poem which "regarded the history of their own country". In return, they pointed out that they already knew this work in their own language (Norn) and had recited it to him in the past (Scott, 1871:460-61). Scott was in Shetland as the guest of Robert L. Stevenson's father who was inspecting the island lighthouses.

⁴ Support for this position can also be found in Marwick, 1929:xviii-xix, and in Olsen 1932, 147-53. Renaud writes:

La production littéraire insulaire peut encore s'enorgueillir de deux grandes compositions: Le *Darraðarljóð*, qui a pour sujet la bataille de Clontarf, livrée en 1014, et dont les onze strophes, sans doute composés peu après cette date, sont conservées dans la *Njáls saga*; et le *Krákumál*, magnifique poème qui raconte les aventures de Ragnarr loðbrók. (Renaud, 1992:191)

In a note on the same page, Renaud observes:

On trouve dans le *Krákumál*, le *Darraðarljóð* et le *Málsháttakvæði* le mot *gagar* (<un chien>), très peu courant et sans doute emprunté au gaélique *gagar* qui, à l'origine, a dû signifier <l'aboyeur>, à partir d'une onomatopée. Ce mot est l'un des indices qui laissent à penser que ces poèmes ont été composés dans les îles.

In this context, it is interesting to note the words of Olsen, "I *Darraðarljóð* forekommer det sjeldne ord *gagarr* <hund> likesom i *Málsháttakvæði* og i *Krákumál*...".

⁵ One of the most interesting aspects of this entry is the fact that the man had been given the

nickname "Norsk". The text here is difficult to understand as it also says: "He probably was a Norwegian himself, judging from his name." On the other hand, if he were a Norwegian, why would he need to go to Norway to learn the language? I think it more likely that the nickname "Norsk", which he bore, was applied *because* he went to Norway. This may have been necessary if he were of Shetland stock and spoke Norn. According to Barnes, Shetland and the Faroe Islands were similar in that, compared to Iceland or Norway, there was little sign of any literary tradition or training (Barnes, 1998:10). Thus when a difference developed between written and spoken Norn, the written followed the lead of language change in mainland Norway while the spoken did not (Barnes, 1998:16). Barnes agrees with Scott's assessment that "Norsk" was a Norwegian. I think it is equally likely that he was a native islander, brought to Norway to improve his written Norwegian so that he could also function as a scribe where legal and other documents were required. These documents were, after all, still being written in the Scandinavian language.

⁶ Conroy noted that the actual omission of the refrain in such circumstances was not based on observation but rather on surmise:

All the informants shortened or omitted the refrain when they sang the ballad outside of the dance. This uniformity suggests that there is a tradition for solo song outside of the the dance that is likely to be traced back to the solo song of the kvöldseta. (Conroy, 1974:52-53 n.13)

⁷ For indications that the leader might often be female see below in the information provided by a Faroese informant.

⁸ There is essentially no break in the dancing since dancers may opt out of a particular dance to rest or chat.

⁹ This would appear to be similar to what happened in Scotland. As Child wrote to Grundtvig on January 24, 1880:

.. an intelligent correspondent says that the Scotch clergy as a *class* have done their best to destroy any relic of antiquity in the shape of tradition or ballad (Hustvedt, 1930:283).

¹⁰ In a French dictionary, this is translated as the name of an old dance in France.

¹¹ In addition, Low noted a phonetic text of *The Lord's Prayer* in Shetland Norn from Foula and contrasted it with the same text as recorded in Orkney Norn. The existence of an apparently Odinic 8-line text in Norn is also recorded in Blind (1896:170-171).

¹² This is not strictly true because Child, in a letter to Grundtvig dated 21 March, 1880, wrote of Child 19 ("King Orfeo"), "The burden is Norse, while the story is English, and the same burden, I gather is used with other songs" (Hustvedt, 1930:286). None of these other songs, however, is mentioned in Child.

¹³ The specific reason for the exclusion of this particular item might well be the fact that Grundtvig suggested, in a letter written on 25 March, 1874, that it should be excluded (Hustvedt, 1930:263-4n). It is, however, listed in Wehse (1979:372) as number 248, "The Goodman of Auchtermuchty" or "The Wife turned Goodman" in the "Marriage Strife" sub-section of the "Marriage and Family".

¹⁴ Turville-Petre points out the ambiguities of this text. While it quite possibly refers to the crucifixion of Christ, it also resembles the text of the *Rúnatal's Þáttr* in the *Hávamál* (strophs 138-45) – which might also have been influenced by Christianity. This *þáttr* was assumed to have been spoken by Odin himself. Turville-Petre (1964:42) gives the first stroph (and translation) of this as:

Veit ek at ek kekki
vindga meiði á
nætr allar nífu,
geiri undaðr

I know that I hung
on the windswept tree
for nine full nights,
wounded with a spear

og gefinn Óðni,
sjálfr sjálfum mér
á þeim meiði,
er manngi veit,
hvers hann af rótum renn.

and given to Óðinn,
myself to myself;
on that tree
of which none know
from what roots it rises.

¹⁵ The history of the classical tale of Orpheus through the ages is given in Bliss (1966). The discovery of the Scots text of *King Orphius* in the early 1970s in the Scottish Records Office is covered in Stewart (1973). This was offered as a missing intermediary between *Sir Orfeo* (the Middle English romance) and *King Orfeo* (Child 19). The opening section of *King Orphius* is missing as is the journey to the Other-world. The remaining text, dated to 1588 (thus later than the youngest English manuscript) does show features in common with both *Sir Orfeo* and the ballad *King Orfeo*.

¹⁶ Cf. Robert Henryson's *Orpheus and Eurydice* for a Scots example of the story without the same degree of "Celtic" admixture (Fox, 1987).

¹⁷ Matras, however disputes this notion of a common *løgmaðr* at that time. He claims that it was a specific interpretation of a Faroese law called "Seyðarbrevið" [the sheep letter] of 1298 made by P.A. Munch, the historian, and later by Jakob Jakobsen. In Matras' opinion, Christian Bærentsen in his work – *Tillæg til Forslag og Betænkninger afgivene af den færøske Landbokommission* (1911), p.12 – has shown this interpretation to be doubtful (Matras, 1968b:91).

CHAPTER 3

"Hildina": A Norn ballad and its Scandinavian parallels

As noted in the previous chapter, there are very few remnants in the northern Isles of Scotland of what appears to have been a rich repertoire of ballads and songs (to say nothing of other genres of oral culture). There is a belief that the *Málsháttakvæði* [The Proverb Poem] is connected to Orkney and that the *Jómsvíkingadrápa* [Lay of the Jómsvikings] is the work of the Orkney Bishop, Bjarni Kolbeinson (d. 1222). There is a possibility that the *Krákumál* [Lay of Kráka – concerning the battle of Ragnar loðbrók] may also be attributed to Orkney because of certain linguistic forms used (Olsen, 1932:147,151). In addition to those, Renaud also attributes the *Háttalykill* to Orcadians Earl Rognvaldr Kali and Hallr Þórarinsson (about 1145). There is also the presumed Orkney origin of the *Darraðarljóð*, concerning the Battle of Clontarf fought in Ireland in 1014, which was discussed in the last chapter (Renaud, 1992:191). These works, however, are now only preserved in Icelandic manuscripts.

When it comes to texts in Norn, the longest one that we have is "Hildina-kvadet" (TSB E97), concerning the relationship between Hildina, daughter of a king of Norway, and an Earl of Orkney. The text was recorded by George Low during his tour of Shetland in 1774. As Low himself wrote concerning the Shetlanders: "Most or all of their tales are relative to the history of Norway; they seem to know little of the rest of Europe but by names; Norwegian transactions they have at their fingers' ends" (Low, 1879:114). The text was taken down from the recitation of William Henry, a farmer at Guttorm on the island of Foula,¹ who, according to Hibbert, was the last surviving person able to give one of the old, historic ballads (Hibbert, 1891:561). A facsimile of this ballad section of Low's manuscript is included as Appendix A. I am not able to give my own direct translation (see below) because this text is Low's own phonetic transcription of what he heard in Norn from his informant, but a brief summary of the story is as follows.

Hildina, daughter of the king of Norway, is abducted by the Earl (Jarl) of Orkney during the king's absence. The king comes in pursuit. Hildina persuades her husband the Jarl to make peace with her father, and her father is persuaded to accept the Jarl as a son-in-law. After the meeting, however, a jealous courtier, Hilluge, who has long lusted after Hildina, re-ignites the king's anger. A duel is arranged between

the Jarl and Hilluge. The latter cuts off the Jarl's head and throws it into Hildina's arms while taunting her. Hildina is now obliged to return with her father to Norway. Hilluge seeks Hildina's hand, her father presses the suit and the lady agrees after being granted the right to serve the wine at the wedding feast. Hildina drugs the wine and, when all fall asleep, has her father removed from the house. At that point the house is set on fire and Hildina gains her revenge by preventing Hilluge's escape.

The text itself consists of the following 35 stanzas which are given here from Low 1879:101-106. Low was not totally happy with the presentation and marked some stanzas to illustrate this point. These are indicated as marked:

* Stanzas viewed by Low as confused, having too much or too little "to render the verse complete".

+ Wording viewed by Low as seeming "to be part of an intermediate stanza, perhaps to be placed between these marked 12 and 13".

There is, as far as I know, only one complete translation of the *Hildina* text.² This was accomplished in 1908 by W.G. Collingwood and published by the Viking Club. The translator carefully stated his aim:

[From Hægstad's] recension, this rendering has been made, as an attempt to represent the ballad in readable English, without sacrificing rhyme and metre to literal translation, though, at the same time without needless paraphrase. Additions to the text are marked with brackets, and asterisks denote the breaks in the story, though it is not certain that any stanzas are missing. In one or two places I have ventured to give a turn to the dialogue, not suggested by Professor Hægstad's notes, but most of the stanzas are line for line, and almost word for word, in the ballad-metre of the original. (Collingwood, 1908:211)

The Collingwood translation is placed beside the Low text but the sub-headings belong to the English version only.

Hildina-kvadet (TSB E97).

Hildina

[The Story opens in Norway]

1. Da vara Jarlin d'Orkneyar
For frinda sin spur de ro
Whirdi an skildè meun
Our glas buryon burtaga.

It was the earl of Orkney
Of his friend has taken rede
Whereby to bring a maiden
Forth of her perilous need
From the Broch of glass to save
her.

2. Or vanna ro eidnar fuo
Tega, du meun our glas buryon
Kere friendè min yamna meun
Eso vrildan stiendi gede min vara to din.
"Take ye the maid from the
Broch of glass,
Dearest friend of mine,
And aye as long as the world
may stand
Shall be told this deed of thine.
*** **
3. Yom keimir cullingin
Fro liene burt
Asta vaar hon fruen Hildina
Hemi stu mer stien.
Homewards comes the noble kin
From the hosting as he rides,
But gone is the lady Hildina;
At home her step-dame bides.
[The King of Norway speaks:]
4. Whar an yaar elonden
Ita kan sadnast wo
An scal vara kundè
Wo osta tre sin reithin ridna dar fro.
"Whoever in all the land he be
Is guilty of this thing,
He shall be hanged on the highest
tree
That forth of root may spring!"
[The Queen's Rede.]
5. Kemi to Orkeynar Jarlin
Vilda mien sante Maunis
I Orknian u bian sian
I lian far diar.
"If the earl be come to Orkney,
St. Magnus will keep him there,
For his home is aye in Orkney;
Then forth with thy hosting fare."
6. An gevè Drotnign kedn puster
On de kin firsane furu
Tworare wo eder
Whitranè kidn.
Whereat he gave the queen a
clout
On the cheek in wrath and spite,
And O but the tears went
coursing
Adown her cheeks so white.
*** **
7. In kimerin Jarlin
U klapasse Hildina
On de kidn quirto
Vult doch, fiegan vara moch or
fly din.*
In came the earl and fondled
Hildina's cheek in glee:—
"Now whether of us are ye fairer
of—
Your father, or of me?"

8. Elde vilda fiegan vara
Fy min u alt sin
Ans namnu wo
So minyach u ere min heve Orkneyar
kingè ro*
- "I would sooner be fain of my
father
And of aught that he can say,
So shall I and my love have
Orkney
To rule for many a day.
9. Nu di skall taga dor yochwo
And u ria dor to strandane nir
U yilsa fly minu avon
Blit an ear ne cumi i dora band.
- "Now shalt thou take thy horse
in hand
And down to the water wend,
And greet my father fair and
blithe;
He will gladly be thy friend."
- [The Earl meets the King.]
10. Nu swaran Konign
So mege gak honon i muthi
Whath ear di ho gane mier
I daute buthe.
- Then said the king – for a many
Came riding to meet him there –
"What gift has gotten to give me
In fee for my daughter fair?"
11. Trettì merkè vath ru godle
Da skall yach ger yo
U all de vara sonna less
So linge sin yach liva mot.
- "Thirty marks of the gold so red
Is the gift that I will give;
Forbye for a son ye shall never
lack
The while that I may live."
12. Nu linge stug an konign
U linge wo an swo
Wordig vaar dogh mugè sonè
Yacha skier fare moga so minde
yach angan
u rost wath comman mier to landa +
- Now stood the king before him,
And long on the earl looked he:–
"Well worth many a son art thou!
I would that it so might be".
[When Orkney's earl and
Norroway's king
In league together stand]
So need I fear no foe soe'er
Might come within my land.
13. Nu swara Hiluge
Hera geve honon scam
Taga di gild firre Hildina
Sin yach skall liga dor fram.
- Then up spoke Illugi –
The Lord to him give shame! –
"This fee shall ye take for Hildina
As I shall set the same: –
14. Estin whaar u feur fetign
Agonga kadn i sluge
Feur fetign sin gonga
Kadn i pluge.
- "Every horse and four-foot beast
That trails a load [in snow];
Every horse and four-foot beast
That in the plough can go."

15. Nu stienderin Jarlin
U linge wo an wo
Dese mo eke Orknear

So linge san yach lava mo.

Then stood the earl before him
And a long look on him cast:
"Never shall Orkney grant that
gift
The while my life shall last!"
*** *** *** ***
- [The Earl goes back to Hildina.]
16. Nu eke tegaran san

Sot Koningn fyrin din
U alt yach an Hilhugin
Widn ugare din arar.

"Now never more his troth and
trust
Will the king thy father yield;
And sore I doubt me Illugi
Would plough his neighbour's
field."
17. Nu swarar an frauna Hildina

U dem san idne i fro
Di slo dor a bardagana
Dar comme ov sin mo.

And the lady Hildina answered
him,
As behind the door she sat:
"Then meet him in the battle,
And come what will of that!"
18. Nu Jarlin an genger

I vadlin fram
U kadnar sina mien
Geven skeger i Orkneyan.

Forth goes the earl to the field of
war
And orders his array,
The peaceful Orkney-beardies
[For the fearsome battle play.]

[News of the battle brought to
Hildina.]
19. Han u cummin

In u vod lerdin
Fronde fans lever
Vel burne mun.

"He is marching through thy
fields, lady,
[He has broken garth and wall,]
And all his friends are following
And thy noble folk they fall!"
20. Nu fruna Hildina
On genger i vadlin fram
Fy di yera da ov man dum

Dora di spidlaikì mire man.

Now lady Hildina hies her
Forth to the field of strife: –
"Father, for manhood's sake
forbear,
And stay this waste of life!"
21. Nu sware an Hiluge
Crego gevan a scam
Gayer an Jarlin frinde

Din an u fadlin in.

Then up and spoke Illugi –
The Lord God him requite! –
"No sooner than the earl, thy
love,
Has fallen in the fight."

22. Nu fac an Jarlin dahuge
 Dar min de an engin gro
 An east ans huge ei
 Fong ednar u vaxhedne more neo.

Then gat the earl his death-stroke
 No hand could heal him more.
 He cast his head into her arms,
 And O but her heart was sore!

*** *** *** ***

[Illugi's boon]

23. Di lava mir gugna
 Yift bal yagh fur o lande
 Gipt mir nu fruan Hildina
 Vath godle u faste bande.

"Grant me to be the bridegroom,
 So bold have I followed thee;
 To the lady Hildina wed me now
 With gold and festing fee.

24. Nu bill on heve da yals

 Guadnè borè u da kadn
 Sina kloyn a bera do skall

 Fon fruna Hildina verka wo
 sino chelsina villya*

Forbear thou then till the bairn be
 born,
 And fair in swaddling dight;
 Then shall the lady Hildina order
 this
 Even as she deemeth right.

*** *** *** ***

25. Hildina liger wo chaldona
 U o dukrar u grothè
 Min du buga till bridlevsin

 Bonlother u duka dogha.

On tapestry fair Hildina lay,
 Her eyes were dim with dole;
 But while they dressed the bridal
 feast
 She brewed a drowsy bowl.

26. Nu Hildina on askar feyrin
 Sien de gava mier livè
 Ou skinka vin

 Ou guida vin.*

Then up and spoke Hildina,
 And prayed her father dear: –
 "Now grant me leave to fill the
 cup,
 And pour the wine so clear."

27. Duska skinka vin,

 u guida vin
 Tinka dogh eke wo
 Jarlin an gougha here din.*

"And who but thou should fill
 the cup,
 And pour for us the wine?
 But think no more upon the earl,
 That worthy lord of thine."

28. Watha skilde tinka
 Wo Jarlin gougà herè min
 Hien minde yagh inga forlskona
 Bera fare kera fyryn min.

"Upon the earl, my worthy lord,
 Though ever I should think,
 Yet shall I bring my father dear
 No draught of ill to drink."

29. Da gerde on fruna Hildina
 On bar se mien ot
 On soverin fest,
 Fysin u quarsin sat.

Thus wrought the lady Hildina –
 She bore the wine around,
 And fast asleep her father lay,
 With his folk upon the ground.

30. Da gerde un fruna Hildina
On bard im ur
Hadlin burt sien on laghdè
Gloug i otsta jatha port.
Thus wrought she: – her father
and all his folk
Forth of the hall she bore,
Thereafter fire she laid alow
To the outermost gate of the
door.
31. Nu iki visti an Hiluge
Ik ov til do
Eldin var commin i lut
U stor u silkè sark ans smo.
And nothing Illugi heeded,
And naught he knew at all,
Till the fire came in at the loft-
house door,
On his silken sark so small.
32. Nu leveren fram
Hiluge du kereda
Fraun Hildina du
Gevemir live u gre.
Then up Illugi started,
[And the flame aroundwas rife]:
"Thou dearest lady Hildina,
Grant me peace and life!"
33. So mege u gouga gre
Skall dogh swo
Skall lathì min heran
I bardagana fwo.
So much good peace shalt thou
behold,
[To ease thee in thy pain;]
As thou thyself wouldst give my
lord
Upon the battle plain
34. Du tuchtada lide undocht yach
Swo et sa ans bugin bleo
Dogh casta ans huge
I mit fung u vexemir mise meo.
"Little ye recked though yonder I
looked
On his body all bloodied o'er,
But cast his head into my arms
And O but my heart was sore!"
35. Nu tachtè on heve fwelsko
Ans bo vad mild u stien
Dogh skall aldè misè Koningnsens
Vadne vilde mien.
And as she took both mould and
stone
On the embers for to fling: –
"Never now shalt thou work thy
evil will
On the daughter of a king!"

(Collingwood, 1908:211-216)

Given its linguistic importance, remarkably few people have concerned themselves with the Hildina ballad. Foremost among those who have, was Marius Hægstad who wrote a monograph about the ballad and what it could tell us about the Norn language (Hægstad 1900), and a journal article about the ballad itself (Hægstad 1901). Indeed, it would appear to be Hægstad who gave the ballad the name of its principal character where Low had called the text "The Earl of Orkney and the King of Norway's Daughter: a ballad".

In the 1901 article, "Hildinakvadet", Hægstad had comments to make about the above-noted text by Low. First and foremost, he noted that it is difficult to read by other than trained linguists – a statement that finds support from later scholars (Barnes, 1991:441). Hægstad explains this by pointing out the problems faced by Low: he did not understand the Norn language, he wrote down the words as he, a Scot, heard them and he employed a standard English orthography to do so. Hægstad also feels that Low may have misinterpreted his first draft because he made changes later, in his manuscript (Hægstad, 1901:2). Hægstad stresses the fact that the ballad is indeed difficult to untangle and that he, Hægstad, had, in 1900, been the first to make the effort. The difficulties in the project were understandable as, Hægstad notes, although Low's handwriting is generally "greid og lettlesi" [obvious and legible], now and then letters ran into each other in a blotch. Sometimes the dot on the 'i' is forgotten or the closure on the 'e' is missing; 'e' is confused with 'o' and 'o' with 'a'. These all impede understanding (Hægstad, 1900:2). The manuscript was lodged first in the Advocates' Library in Edinburgh (Hægstad, 1900:1) and is now in the Library of the University of Edinburgh (manuscript La.III.580). The work was finally published in 1879. George Barry and Joseph Anderson (who prepared the Low manuscript for publication) both studied the original handwriting of the manuscript. In addition, Professor Alf Torp studied the lantern slides of the text that had been made in 1884. Barry (1808) and Munch (1838) both included the text in their publications (Hægstad, 1900:1). Anderson, Barry, Munch and Torp all made attempts to clarify ambiguities in the text and their various readings of the script are noted in the Norn text used in Hægstad 1900:2-9. Hægstad also re-examined Low's poorly-distinguished line and verse divisions in addition to providing some analysis of the Norn language.³

In the 1901 article, Hægstad actually gives a translation of the ballad into Nynorsk (one of the two official languages of Norway) which was familiar to the readers of the *Syn og Segn* journal in which he published. He notes that this translation is a somewhat free one of the original in Norn as he has made slight alterations to accommodate a rhyme scheme. This is somewhat similar to the claims of Collingwood for his translation (see above). In three places, where he felt there were missing lines in the Norn text, Hægstad supplied lines from context or from a Faroese text. Two of these interpolations are included here in italic and enclosed in square brackets, while the third is treated in note 6. The following text is Hægstad's Nynorsk translation (Hægstad, 1901:3-9).⁴ His translation made it possible for me to offer an English version made before I had access to the Collingwood translation. The combination of the two translations offered may help give some better feeling of the original.

Hildina-kvadet.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Det var jarlen or Orknøyom,
han spurde sin frende um raad,
um han skulde den møyi
or vanden henne faa, –
or glasborgi burt-taka. | It was the Earl of Orkney,
he asked his relative for advice,
whether he ought to take the girl
away from her suffering, and
away from Castle Glass. ⁵ |
| 2. "Teker du møyi or glasborgi,
kjære venan min,
so lenge som denne verdi stender,
skal spyrjast mannskapen din." | "Take her away from Castle Glass,
my dear friend,
as long as the world exists,
your manly deed will be told." |
| 3. Heim kjemer edlingen
fraa leiding med sine menn.
Burte og vekk var fru Hildina;
heime stykmôr stend. | The king came home,
from a campaign with his men.
up and away was lady Hildina;
the stepmother stands there. |
| 4. "Kvar han er i landi
dette kann sannast paa,
han skal verta hengd i det høgste tre
som rotom renner ifraa." | "Wherever he is in the country
it is certainly true,
he shall be hanged from the highest tree
with roots running from it." |
| 5. "Kjemer harlen til Orknøyar,
St. Magnus kann styra det so:
han vert der verande all si tid:
far difor etter han no." | "If the Earl reaches Orkney,
St. Magnus will ensure that he
spends the rest of his life there:
thus you should go after him now." |
| 6. Daa gav han dronningi
ein kinnhest under kinn;
med sanno rann det taaror
paa hennar kvitare kinn. | Then he gave the Queen
a slap on the face;
and be sure that her tears
ran down her white cheeks. |
| 7. Inn kjemer den jarlen,
klappar Hildina under kinn:
"Kven vil du no feig skal vera,
eg eller fa'er din?" | In the Earl comes,
pats Hildina under the chin:
"Whom do you want to die,
me or your father?" |
| 8. "Heller vilde eg får var feig
og alt som hans namm er paa;
daa skulde eg og min hæve herre
Orknøyar lenge raa'. | "I would rather my father died
and everyone with his name;
then I and my good lord
should long govern Orkney. |
| 9. "No skal du taka ein gangar fram
og rida deg ned til strand,
og helsa får min ovende blidt;
maa henda de semjast kann." | "You must take a horse
and ride down to the beach,
and greet my father very kindly;
maybe you can be reconciled." |

- | | | |
|-----|---|--|
| 10. | No svara konongen
– so mykje gjekk honom imot –
"Kva hev du aa gjeva meg
i dotterbot?" | Now the king answered
– much as he was unwilling –
"What will you give me as
recompense for abducting my daughter?" |
| 11. | "Tretti merker i raudegull,
det skal du hja meg faa,
og aldri vera sonelaus,
so lenge som eg liva maa." | "Thirty marks of red gold,
you shall get from me now,
and you will never be without a son
as long as I shall live." |
| 12. | No lenge stod den knongen,
og lenge paa ponom saag:
"Du er jamgod med mange søner,
eg ynskjer me semjast maa." | The king stood for a long time,
and looked at him for a while:
"You are as good as many sons,
I wish we could be reconciled." |
| 13. | " <i>Og fer det som eg ynskjer det,
at du gjeng med til hande,</i>
daa skulde eg ingen uven ræddast,
um han kom meg til lande." | "And if I get what I want,
that you will help me,
then I would not fear any enemy,
that might come to my country." |
| 14. | No svarrar Hilluge
– Herre, gjev honom skam –:
"Tak vederlag for Hildina
som eg vil leggja fram:" | Now Hilluge answers
– May God shame him –:
"Take that recompense for lady Hildina
that I will suggest:" |
| 15. | "Kvar ein hest og firføting,
so før at ei horv han drog, --
kvar ein hest og firføting,
som ganga kann for plog." | "Every horse and four-footed animal,
which is able to draw a harrow,
every horse and four-footed animal,
which can walk before a plough." |
| 16. | No stender han, jarlen,
og lenge paa honom saag:
"Dette vinn ikkje Orknøyar,
so lenge eg liva maa." | The Earl stands now,
and looks at him for a while:
"This will not happen in Orkney,
as long as I live." |
| 17. | "No tek han ikkje mot semja god,
konongen fa'er din.
Eg tenkte meg og at Hilluge
ber anna uti sitt sinn." | "Now he is against reconciliation,
your father, the king.
It seemed to me that Hilluge also
had something else in mind." |
| 18. | No svarar fru Hildina
or døri si inne ifraa:
"So fær de stridast med odd og egg,

det gange av som det maa." | Now Hildina answers
from inside the room:
"Then you must fight with point
and edge,
let it happen as it has to be." |
| 19. | No jarlen han gjeng
paa vollen fram
og kannar sine menn,
dei gjæve skjeggjar i Orkknøym. ⁶
[vellborne menn.] | Now the king went
and stood on the battlefield
and viewed his men,
the noble men of Orkney, |

20. "Kongen, han er komen;
ho gjenger i vollen fram:
Venen hans driv paa flugt
dei velborne menn."
- "The king arrives,
he goes forward onto the battlefield:
His friends put to flight
those well-born men."
21. No fruva Hildina
ho gjenger i vollen fram:
"Får, aa gjer no eit manndomsverk,
og spill ikkje fleire mann!"
- Now the lady Hildina
she goes forward onto the battlefield:
"Father, for the sake of humanity,
don't waste more men's lives."
22. No svarar han Hilluge
– Herre gud gjev honom skam –:
"Ja, naar jarlen, venen din,
ogso er fallen, han."
- Now Hilluge answers
– May the good Lord shame him –
"Yes, as soon as your friend the Earl
has also fallen."
23. No fekk jarlen daudehogg
– det saaret kunde ei gro –.
Han kasta hans hovud i
fanget hennar,
daa voks det stort hennar mod.
- Now the Earl got his death blow
– nobody could heal that wound –.
He threw his head into her arms,
and she grew even more angry.
24. "De lova meg gifta,
um djerv eg før or land.
Gjev meg no fru Hildina
med gull og festebande."
- "I was promised marriage,
if I boldly went abroad.
Give me now the lady Hildina
with gold and betrothal vows."
25. "No bidlund have du til barn
er boret
og kann sine klæde bera,
daa skal fruva Hildina
faa skølv sin vilje gjera."
- "Now you must wait till the child is born
and can be clothed,
then can the lady Hildina
decide for herself."
26. Hildina ligger paa tjeldet,
og augo dimme ho græt,
men daa dei bur til brudlaupet,
ho daae i drykken læt.
- Hildina lies on the quilt,
and cries her eyes out,
but when preparation is made for the
wedding
she puts hemp nettle [a sleeping draft] in
the drinks.
27. Ho Hildina ho beder
fa'er sin;
"Du gjeve meg løyve aa
skjenka vin,
aa fylla i vin."
- Hildina asks
her father;
"Permit me to serve the wine,
to pour the wine."
28. "Du skal skjenkja vin
og fylla i vin;
men tenk no ikkje paa jarlen,
den goden herren din."
- "You may serve the wine
and pour the wine;
but do not think about the Earl,
your good husband."

- | | | |
|-----|---|---|
| 29. | "Um eg tenke paa jarlen,
den gode herren min,
eg vilde daa ingi svik-kanna bera
fyre fa'er min." | "Yes, indeed I think about the Earl,
that good husband of mine,
otherwise I would not set a treacherous
cup before my father." |
| 30. | Det gjorde fru Hildina,
ho fram den mjøder bar;
ho svæver so fast inn fåren,
fåren og alle som var. | That's what Hildina did,
she brought out the mead;
she makes her father sleep so quickly,
[her] father and everyone else there. |
| 31. | Det gjorde fru Hildina,
ho bar deim or halli burt;
sidan lagde ho eld og glod
i ytste op i port. | That's what Hildina did,
she carried them out of the hall;
then she put fire and embers
in the outer gate. |
| 32. | No ikkje visste han Hilluge
noko av til daa
elden var komen i lofthusdør
og silkeserken hans smaa. | Now Hilluge did not know
anything at all until
fire came to the guest house door
and his fine silk shirt. |
| 33. | No springer han Hilluge fram,
[stod uti borge-led]:
"Aa, kjæraste du fru Hildina,
du gjeve meg liv og grid!" | Now Hilluge ran out
and stood on the balcony:
"Oh, my very dearest Lady Hildina,
save and forgive me!" |
| 34. | "Like mykje og like god grid
skal du no sjaa,
som du sjølv lét herren min
i striden dykkar faa. | "The very same forgiveness
you shall now see,
as you yourself gave my husband
in your battle. |
| 35. | "Det tyktest deg lite, endaa eg
saag kroppen hans all i blod,
du kasta hans hovud i mitt fang,
daa voks det stort mitt mod." | "You seemed to think it was nothing
when I saw his body all covered in blood,
you threw his head into my arms,
then my anger grew strong." |
| 36. | No tekt ho heve hans
baade med mold og stein.
"Du skal aldri meir konongsens
barn valda mein." | Now she has covered his ashes
with both earth and stone.
"You will never again do harm
to the king's child [Hildina]." |

There is no equivalent to this entire ballad narrative in Scottish tradition but individual motifs from it do occur and this might enable us to get some feel for the impact of passages in the ballad unhampered by the stiffness of translation. Let us consider three different motifs that are prominent in "Hildina": 1) the choice that has to be made when the lover must fight the young woman's family, 2) the reaction to the severed head of a lover and 3) the nature of revenge inflicted on a man who believes all is forgiven and comes trustingly to his death. The four Scottish versions of "Earl Brand" (Child 7), for instance, concern themselves with the similar motif of the

abduction of a willing young noblewoman. In the case of "Earl Brand", however, detection and pursuit are soon accomplished. There is no time for the lovers to delight in their escape. Here, as in "Hildina", we have the battle of father (or brothers) against a would-be son-in-law and it is imperative that the lady choose sides. At first she stands aside and watches the conflict. When she does intervene, it is to ask her lover to spare her father – the exact opposite of what happens in "Hildina". Where Hildina begs:

"Father, for the sake of humanity,
don't waste more men's lives."

Lady Margaret reacts:

"O' hold your hand, Lord William!" she said,
"For your strokes they are wonderous sair;
True lovers I can get many a ane,
But a father I can never get mair." (Child 7B:7)

It is interesting to note that there is, in Child 7, no element of "dead-naming", that is that the naming of a fighter will bring about his death. Such a motif is generally present in the Scandinavian analogues of the ballad (represented in Danish by "Ribold og Guldberg", DgF 82, and present in every Scandinavian land except the Faroe Islands).

The reaction to receiving the severed head of a loved one is difficult to imagine. In the case of Hildina it is without words:

Now the Earl got his death blow
– nobody could heal that wound –
He threw his head into her arms
and she grew even more angry. (23)

In "Bob Norris" a Scottish version of "Child Maurice" (Child 83) we have another lady who receives a head but is immediately more demonstrative:

He tock the bluidie heid in his haun
And brocht it to the haw
An flang it into his ladie's lap
Sayand lady thare's a baw. (20)

She tock the bluidie heid in her haun
An kissit it frae cheik to chin
Sayand Better I lyke that weil faurit face
Than aw my royal kin. (21)

This, in turn is reminiscent of a similar scene in "Little Musgrave and Lady Barnard" (Child 81) where Lord Barnard asks his wife:

"Oh how do ye like his cheeks, ladie?
Or how do ye like his chin?
Or how do ye like his fair bodie,
That there's nae life within?" (81G:26)

and she replies:

"Oh well I like his cheeks," she said,
And weel I like his chin;
And better I like his fair bodie,
Than a' your kith and kin." (29)

This anguished response, of course, leads to her death.

The drugging of food or drink is not uncommon in Scottish ballads and it is used to devastating effect where revenge is to be gained on a man who comes naively trusting that past misdeeds have been forgiven. In "Hildina" we saw her preparations for the wedding to the villain Hilluge:

Hildina lies on the quilt
and cries her eyes out,
but when preparation is made for the wedding,
she puts hemp nettle in the drinks. (26)

That's what Hildina did,
she brought out the mead;
she made her father sleep so quickly
[her] father and everyone else there. (30)

After that, of course, she is able to set a light to Hilluge's room and he dies in the fire.

This use of narcotics and poisons appears to be particularly popular with women who wish to rid themselves of lovers for various reasons. In the case of Lord Ronald ("Lord Randall", Child 12) the past misdeed is never revealed. Lord Ronald innocently accepts an invitation to dine and is given eels or fish. His dogs die from having eaten scraps of the meal and he himself has come home to die. With his dying breath, he condemns his true love because she has poisoned him. For Lord Thomas ("Lord Thomas and Lady Margaret", Child 260, [Lyle, 1995]) the situation is much clearer. He had chased down his lover, Lady Margaret, with the aid of his hunting dogs and she is still incensed. When Lord Thomas appears at her husband's castle, she invites him to drink with her and he gladly and naively accepts. Lady Margaret's



preparations are, however, even more deadly than Hildina's

She called for her butler boy
Tae draw her a pint o' wine
An' wi' her fingers lang an' sma'
She steer'd the poison in (11)

She put it tae her rosie cheeks
Ayne tae her dimple'd chin
She put it tae her rubbie lips
But ne'er a drap gaed in (12)

He put it tae his rosie cheeks
Syne tae his dimple'd chin
He put it tae his rubbie lips
An' the rank poison gaed in (13)

Hildina does not use a drug to kill but rather as "knock-out drops" that allow her to set the scene for the fire and her revenge on Hilluge. In all the above mentioned instances, the motifs in "Hildina" are present in Scottish ballads but the contexts are just a little different.

Hægstad makes the same point, "I have neither seen or heard any song which is quite like this one in any other country" (Hægstad, 1901:9). He then, however, proceeds to comment on a series of Scandinavian ballads concerning the theme of abduction and rescue and employing characters of the same name. These are the Faroese "Kappin Illhugi" (CCF 18), the Norwegian "Kappen Illugjen" (Landstad 2), and the Danish "Herr Hylleland" (DgF 44). These are all listed in TSB under E140.⁷

These ballads all concern themselves with a king's daughter (Hild or Helleliti) who is abducted by a giantess (or a troll woman). The king offers his daughter in marriage to the man who rescues her. The hero Illuge (in Denmark, Hylleland) succeeds and gains the promised reward. In Shetland, Hilluge is the villain; in the other ballads, he is the hero. In Shetland, the abduction is accomplished by the hero; in the others, the abducting ogress is the villain. From this picture, Hægstad reasons that the ballads "Hildina" and "Illuge" are related by descent from a common source (Hægstad, 1901:10).⁸

The search for just such a common source had been pursued in the previous century. It led Professor P.A. Munch (as reported in Hægstad, 1901:11-12) to suggest that the first part of the "Hildina-kvadet" (up to the scene of the battle) was reminiscent of the legend of the Battle of Hjadninge as told in both the "Younger Edda" and in the "Sørla Þátr" (in the "Saga of Olav Trygvesson") – both of which may be dated to the thirteenth century or earlier.⁹ There is some variation in the details of the endings of

these two ballads but, in general, they are the same. A king, Hogne, has a daughter Hild who is abducted by Hedin Hjarrandeson while Hogne is away from home. Hogne follows Hedin north to Norway and then west to Haaføy [Hoy] in Orkney. Hild tries to effect a reconciliation as does Hedin but both fail. Battle is joined and Hild resorts to sorcery. Each night she raises the dead and reconstitutes the weapons. In the "Edda" it is said that this battle will continue until Ragnarokk. In the "Saga of Olav Trygveson", however, there is the expected Christian intervention. Odin orders the battle to continue until a Christian man comes between the warring armies. This happens with the arrival of Trygveson: Hedin and Hogne are both killed and the sorcery brought to an end. This, for Munch, was the basis for stanzas 1-22 of "Hildina" while stanzas 23 to the end were considered to be an imitation of some chivalric romance or other from the 13th or 14th century (Hægstad, 1901:12).

Hægstad agrees that a development, such as that which splits the single character of Hogne into the dual Shetlandic characters of king and Hilluge, is indeed possible. He also acknowledges that the name "Hild", which in Old Germanic signified "fight", or "discord" was an appropriate name "for a woman who had dominion over discord between men." (Hægstad, 1901:13) He is not, however, convinced that this is the source of "Hildina-kvadet". He feels that the ballad was composed as a single unit and estimates that it originated some time between 1650 and 1700 (Hægstad, 1901:13). This would place it after the start of the Norn language decline (cf. Smith 1996; Barnes 1998). If Hægstad's dating is accurate, it is surprising that the ballad language contains so little Scottish admixture. This may, however, be explained in the section on bilingualism in Chapter 11.

Hægstad also comments on the poem itself and finds it "full of dramatic expression" in "unaffected form" with a "plain vocabulary" (but see Barnes' comments on the ballad language below). He reasons that, "Verseformi og mange vendingar i visa lærer oss at folkediktingi paa Shetland hev havt ei form millom færøsk og heime-norsk." [The verse form and the many turns of speech in the ballad teach us that folk poetry in Shetland had a form between Faroese and the original Norwegian.] But he shows that the actual language itself tends to be closer to the dialect forms in Ryfylke and West Agder (Norway) than it is to Faroese (Hægstad, 1901:13-4). (See also below.) This claim is supported in the 1900 monograph with a line by line / verse by verse analysis of the poem comparing word forms and grammatical constructs with their parallels in other Scandinavian languages and dialects (Hægstad, 1900:20-31). In addition, Hægstad provides an extensive, alphabetic glossary which also supplies the same information. As far as the claim about the verse forms is concerned, Hægstad, in the process of his verse analyses, takes the ballad commonplaces and illustrates how

the same or similar expressions have been used in (mostly) Faroese and Norwegian ballads.

The examples given to illustrate this point argue quite persuasively for some connections between Shetland and the Faroe Islands, even if only through Bergen in Norway. There is the example of verse 20 in the Norn text:

Nu fruna Hildina
on genger i vadlin fram
Fy di yera da ov man dum
Dora di spidlaiki mire man.

Now the lady Hildina
she goes forward onto the battle field
"Father, for the sake of humanity
Don't waste more men's lives."

Against this is given an example from the 66th verse of the Faroese ballad "Finnur hin Fríði" (FK, 2:100-101; now also CCF 26). Unfortunately, the use of Low's mangled phonetic text does not show as much visual similarity as a properly reconstituted dialect form might..

Tað var frúgvín Ingibjörg,
hon fellur á síni knæ:
ger tað fyri manndóm tín,
tú gef tann riddara mær.

It was the lady Ingibjörg,
she fell to her knees:
do this for the sake of your humanity,
don't kill any more knights like this.

There are even story similarities here since the hero is Finn (son of Earl Olav of Norway and brother of Halvdan den stærke) who goes to Ireland to seek a wife. He becomes enamoured of Ingebjorg, daughter of the king of Ireland, and is embroiled in battle. Perhaps even clearer is the relationship between verse 4 in the Low text;

Whar an yaar elonden
Ita kan sadnast wo
An scal vara keindè
Wo osta tre sin reithin rìdna dar fro.

"Wherever he is in the country
it is certainly true,
he will be hanged from the highest tree
with roots running from it."

and verse 48 from the Faroese ballad "Ormar Tórólvsson" (FK, 2:78; CCF 24A, "Ormar Tóraldssons kvæði" verse 30)

Er her nakar af mínum monnum
Einari kennir á
hann skal hanga í hægste træ
sum rótum rennur frá.

If any of my men here
stands accused
he will be hanged from the highest tree
with roots running from it.

Even the matter of asking for mercy is phrased in terms of a commonplace. Verses 32-33 in the Norn "Hildina":

(kereda) Fraun Hildina du
Gevemir live u gre.

"Oh, my very dearest Lady Hildina,
Save and forgive me."

So mege u gouga gre
 Skall dogh swo
 Skall lathì min heran
 I bardagana fwo.

"The very same forgiveness
 you shall now see,
 as you yourself gave my husband
 in your battle."

echo the verses 46-47 of "Arngríms Synir" (FK, 2:21; CCF 16D).

--- --- ---
 mín kæra Hervík,
 gev mær grið.

--- --- ---
 my dear Hervík,
 grant me forgiveness.

Slíkan skaltú griðin
 af mær fá,
 sum tú læt mín sæla faðir
 við sínum lívi ná.

Just such forgiveness will you
 get from me,
 as you allowed my beloved father
 along with his life.

Similar examples are also given from Norwegian texts. All this is not to imply, however, that there is total acceptance of Hægstad's placing of Norn in an original relationship with south-west Norway. Pettersen (1988) sees much Swedish influence in the Norn vocabulary. Renaud, on the other hand, wonders if the continuation of Shetland-Bergen trading into the eighteenth century affected the language samples that were first collected in the nineteenth century (Renaud, 1992:150). Vocabulary arriving from the Bergen area in this latter period might tend to obscure the earlier language forms and even influence the ideas of the geographic origins of the Scandinavian settlers. This assumption of incoming language influence is echoed by Barnes who, in an earlier paper, drew on Murison (1954) to suggest,

that a number of words Jacobsen assumed to be Scandinavian are in fact of Dutch or Low German origin. They were probably borrowed into Norn or Scots, or both, as a result of the extensive contacts that existed first with the Hanseatic traders and later with the Dutch fishing industry. (Barnes, 1991:445)

It was noted above that the Scandinavian ballads concerning Illuge were grouped together in TSB as E140 while "Hildina-kvadet" was listed as E97. This is a sub-grouping "Woman's lover killed by rival, and she takes revenge" under the group heading of "Erotic complications lead to conflict". Most of the surrounding ballads mentioned in the listings of this group (49 ballads from E64 to E112) are exclusively Faroese. Of the 11 exceptions, 4 are found in Norway as well as in the Faroe Islands, 3 are found in Denmark only, 1 in Iceland only and 2 are found in a wider Scandinavian distribution. It is interesting to note the lack of wider Scandinavian parallels in this group and to speculate as to whether more such ballads had, in the past, existed in Shetland as well as in the Faroes.

In any case, "Hildina" also shows a remarkable number of features in common with E98, "Grimmars kvæði" (CCF 51). As the story is rather involved, I quote here from the summary printed in TSB:

King Haraldur of Ongland goes to propose to Hilda, daughter of King Grimmar of Gardaríke. King Grimmar is away at war. Haraldur does not wait to get Grimmar's consent, and he and Hilda return to Ongland and marry. Hilda gets three sons. Later Haraldur wants to visit Grimmar. He leaves his youngest son Gormundur at home and brings the two others. He helps Grimmar win a war, but while he is away Grimmar prepares to take his life. He gives Haraldur so much to drink that he falls asleep and then sets fire to the house. Haraldur and his sons are killed. Haraldur's men return to Gormundur and Hilda with the news. Later Hilda marries the emperor Sjúrdur and gets the son Haraldur by him. Gormundur goes to Gardaríke to revenge his father's death on Grimmar. (Var. A: Grimmar tries to stop Gormundur's ship by magic.) Grimmar and Gormundur fight, and both use magic against the other. Finally Gormundur defeats Grimmar but spares his life and sends a message to Hilda. She sends her son Haraldur to Gardaríke, where he kills Grimmar. Gormundur succeeds Grimmar as king, and Haraldur returns to Ongland. (TSB, E98, 240)

A comparison of the texts of "Hildina" and "Grimmars kvæði" is interesting. The Faroese text is lengthy: CCF 51B has 224 verses¹⁰ distributed in three sub-ballads or *táttir*: The first is "Haralds táttur", the second is "Grimmars táttur" and the third is "Gormunds táttur". Each of these sub-ballads is named for the principal character. The 72 verses of the "Haralds táttur" deal with the character and appearance of Grimmar the king, Hilda his daughter, and Harald the abductor. The greater length of the Faroese ballad provides scope for descriptions that are totally absent in the Scottish Norn version.

Grimmar is described as king of Garðaríke (which was the Norse kingdom of Novgorod). Hilda dreams in stanza 3 that she is carried off: "Sunnan kom ein hvítur fuglur, bar meg yvir björgum" [A white bird came from the south and carried me over the cliffs]. Grimmar interprets this as meaning that a Christian king would come and carry her away. This, however, does not prevent Grimmar from leaving his daughter at home when he sets out with his army. Hilda herself is described in eight verses in terms of her physical appearance and of how she is treated by her father. Some examples are:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>10. Grimmar kongur dóttur eigur,
 hava hanna menn við orði,
 henni er stólar av gulli gjørdur
 framman for kongins borði.</p> | <p>King Grimmar had a daughter,
 he praised her,
 she had the golden chair
 at the king's table.</p> |
|---|--|

- | | | |
|-----|--|--|
| 12. | Grimmar kongur dóttur eigur,
væna og so mæta,
einans er hon arvingin
til góðs og land at gæta. | King Grimmar had a daughter,
beautiful and respected,
the sole heir to guard
the goods and land. |
| 13. | Hon ber ekki bleika brá
undir sínum gula hári
heldur enn tann fagraða
summarsól
ið fagurt skín um várið. | Her face was not pallid
under her golden hair
rather it was like the loveliest summer
sun
which shines brightly. |

When Grimmar leaves, Hilda stays behind and wears the crown.

Harald is introduced in stanzas 6-9 and is later described as king of Ongland (which usually means England). Like the Earl in "Hildina", Harald is asking for advice. Where the Earl asks whether he should carry off a particular girl and is so advised "Teker du møyi or glasborgi, kjære venen min" [Take the girl from Castle Glass, dear friend], Harald asks his servants where he could find a suitable lady and the daughter of Grimmar is mentioned, "hoyrt havi eg gitið Grimmars kong, so væna dóttur ár" [I have heard the rumour that king Grimmar has a beautiful daughter]. There are no details in "Hildina" of anything that occurs between the recommendation of abduction and the return of the king her father. In the Faroese text, however, there is considerable description of the boat Harald built for the journey and of his initial meeting with Hilda. Despite her request to wait until her father comes home, Harald tells her that she, and she alone, will come with him. He takes her away without wounding anyone and even leaves the crown in a wing of the castle. Hilda journeys in honour and is married in splendour. She bears Harald three sons, twins called Sjúrd and Halgir, followed by their younger brother, Gormund. The Shetlandic Hildina, by contrast is only expecting her child when her husband is killed.

At this point the *táttur* returns to concern itself with king Grimmar. His initial question (stanza 63) is the classic "Hvør hevur her till hallir verið, siðan eg heiman fór?" [What happened in this hall, after I left home?] and he is then given the details. His reaction is in sharp contrast to that of the grieving father in "Hildina". That king swears the guilty party "skal verta hengd i det høgste tre, som rotom renner ifraa" [shall be hanged from the highest tree with roots running from it] and promptly sets out in pursuit. Grimmar, on the other hand, bitterly questions (stanza 67) that his kingdom could not even defend one woman, gets so upset that he could not drink brown mead for a week (stanza 68) and then effectively cuts Hilda off, saying he will not go to Ongland while Hilda lives there (stanzas 70-72).

The second sub-division, "Grimmars táttur", concerns the actions of Hilda's father. Whereas in "Hildina" it is the father who pursues the abductor for a

confrontation, in the Faroese text, it is the abductor who travels to the father to seek reconciliation. He takes the twin sons, Sjúrd and Halgir, but Hilda is required to stay at home with the youngest, Gormund; thus she will not be there to encourage reconciliation as Hildina was. Hilda also warns Harald that her father is quick to turn to treachery. Once again there is a description of the ship with silk sails, loaded with beer and wine. Harald sails with nine warships and is happy with the speed they made towards Garðaríke. One of his sons, however, urged him to return home instead.

Where the Earl meets his father-in-law out in the open, Harald and his sons go to greet the king in his hall. Harald introduces the sons that Hilda bore him and Grimmar announces his desire to foster the young Sjúrd. There is no bargaining over any recompense for the abduction of Hilda. This feature, so prominent in "Hildina" is totally missing in the Faroese. Missing also is the evil courtier who provokes the battle and kills the Earl. Nor is Hildina present to be protected by her father or to hatch an unpleasant revenge. Instead, we go straight to the revenge, of the same type but this time inflicted by the father on the good husband (the abductor). Drugged wine is served. The result is as predictable in Faroese as it was in Norn: (stanza 99) "Fyrstur sovnaði Haraldur kongur, síðan hírdin øll" [First, king Harald fell asleep and then his whole retinue], as against "Ho svæver so fast inn fâren, fâren og all som var" [She makes her father sleep so quickly, [her] father and everyone else there]. The next actions are also similar. Hildina removed the guests from the hall to their quarters which she then sets on fire. Grimmar has Harald and his men carried to their quarters which are then fired. The descriptions of the death of Harald and his son Sjúrd are extended (nearly 20 stanzas) and gruesome. By and large, however, the actions of Hildina in granting Hilluge the same mercy given to the Earl (i.e. none) is, in its straightforward starkness, the more effective rendition.

The third section of "Grimmars kvæði", "Gormunds táttur", deals with the vengeance gained by Harald's son Gormund on the evil king Grimmar. This is not analysed as there is no equivalent in the Shetlandic text. Let us, however, leave the consideration of this lengthy Faroese text and return to the "Hildina" ballad itself and to the actual language used in it.

Hægstad had much to say about the morphology, phonology and syntax of Norn (Hægstad, 1900:32-75) and much of this is supported by the modern linguist, Michael Barnes. Barnes distinguishes between the examples we have of written and spoken Norn and observes that the written form has reflected the changes in Norwegian with the increasing Danicisation of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and the complete breakdown of the Norse system of inflexion. Everyday speech in Orkney

and Shetland, however,

appears to have developed in much the same way as Faroese and, to a lesser extent, the more conservative dialects of western Norway: only limited Danicisation is evident, while the essentials of the inflexional system seem still to have been intact in the sixteenth century, and in Shetland to have remained so in the seventeenth and possibly even into the eighteenth. (Barnes, 1998:18)

Further comments on the changes in Norn show that it continued to follow a path similar to Faroese (Barnes, 1988:17):

Norn shares a number of retentions and innovations with dialects in South West Norway ... even more striking are the parallels with Faroese.....

The morphology and syntactic system of Norn too has undergone changes, many of which also characterise Faroese.....

[I]t is worth noting that Norn, like Faroese and Icelandic, but unlike post-Reformation Danish, Swedish and Norwegian, exhibits subjectless sentences.

These observations of Barnes' are supported by his numerous examples of sound shifts and other linguistic evidence which encourage the belief that Norn and Faroese would retain a certain degree of intercomprehensibility. Thus, at least for as long as Norn remained, there was no great linguistic bar to contacts between Shetland and the Faroe Islands. These contacts are the subject of Chapter 4.

NOTES

¹ According to Barnes, there are two interesting problems with taking what Low wrote as an authentic example of the language of Foula. Firstly, the island was devastated by the plague (presumed to be smallpox) in 1720 and repopulated from other islands, and secondly, there are several traditions of shipwrecked Faroese fishermen settling in Foula. Barnes, however, does not feel that these factors would be sufficient to affect the general situation (Barnes, 1998:18).

² Verses 1-12 appear in a somewhat better translation in Chadwick, 1921:218-219. Chadwick's translation also appears in Leach, 1946:275-76 and is included in this work as Appendix B. An editorial footnote to Collingwood, 1908:211 also states that a further translation of Hildina by G.F.Black was in progress and would be published when completed. This translation has not been located and its existence is not certain.

³ Barnes is not convinced that the ballad can tell us as much about the language as we hoped and feels that it can only "show that Shetland Norn was a west Scandinavian language whose inflectional system had undergone some simplification in comparison with Old Norse" (Barnes, 1991:441). Moreover, on the general linguistic utility of the ballad, he notes that: "Scandinavian ballads are often poor guides to contemporary speech. Faroese and Norwegian ballads, for example, not only contain archaic linguistic features, as one might expect, but also a number which do not seem ever to have

been part of everyday language ..." (Barnes, 1991:441). This still might have no effect on the argument that Faroese and Shetlanders could communicate with each other possibly up to 1800 (see Barnes, 1998:16 quoted later in the chapter).

⁴ Stanzas 12-13 correspond to stanza 12 in the Norn so that stanzas 14-36 are equivalent to the Norn 13-35.

⁵ *Glasborgi* may refer to the fact that the castle had many windows made of glass. On the other hand, it may simply mean 'magnificent palace' on analogy with the Faroese *glæstriborg*.

⁶ Hægstad at this point inserts [*vellborne menn*] as the last line. This would make a total of 5 lines in the stanza because I have broken Hægstad's first line at the same point as it was broken in the Low text. I suspect that Hægstad ran the first two lines together and added the extra line in order to produce a complete rhyme scheme. Its retention, however, does provide that degree of repetition that is part of the structure of the text.

⁷ All of these ballads are seen by Liestøl as having their source in the Old Norse *Illuga saga Griðarfóstra* (Liestøl, 1970:104).

⁸ It remains to be seen whether Hildina could also claim 'influence' from *Illuga saga Griðarfóstra* even while 'descended', according to Hægstad from some common ancestor.

⁹ Chadwick, 1921:64 also finds merit in this relationship.

¹⁰ Other versions are even longer.

CHAPTER 4

Scottish-Faroese contacts

Thus far as concerns Scotland and the Faroe Islands, I have looked at that history that communicated a common culture to the Faroes and the northern Scottish islands. I have mentioned and compared the examples of Shetland's Scandinavian ballad culture (that had survived the political separation from Scandinavia) with what existed contemporaneously in the Faroes. At the same time, I have noted the absence of close parallels in mainland Scotland. The next step is to consider what contacts existed between the Faroes and Shetland / Scotland which supported this continuation of Scandinavian ballad culture in Shetland and might also have allowed a further interchange of ballads between the two areas.

Following H.D. Joensen (1981), I have chosen to approach the study of these contacts in terms of some of his headings: general, trade, fishing, and economic development. To the last of these I have added war, to take account of the impact of this factor in the mid-twentieth century.

GENERAL

Although opportunities for cultural exchange did exist in terms of shipwrecked sailors (who had to wait on land for the next sailing season), visitors, immigration and returning students (all usually from Denmark) there is little or nothing to prove any Scottish involvement in, or influence on, the Faroese ballad culture from these quarters.

One export from Scotland – religious missionaries – did, however, have a profoundly negative effect on Faroese ballad culture – as was explained at some length in Chapter 2. My Faroese informant gave a closer view of at least one of these missionaries:

There was a man from Glasgow called William Sloan [the family came from the Ayrshire area] his family is still up there. Andrew is his son, there are lots of Sloans up there. And so that, in some ways it was a good thing because there was a lot of drunkenness around and the misery that came with that as you can imagine, men wasting their hard-earned wages on drink and their families not getting food whatever, that's what usually happened. So that was done away with but at the same time, unfortunately the ballad was taboo.

These are exactly the united forces of temperance and evangelism noted by Galvin (1994:83) and included in Chapter 2 of this work.

TRADE

Under the general heading of trade, it is necessary to distinguish: A Legal trade, B Piracy, C Illegal trade (smuggling) and D Transit trade.

A Legal trade

In this present bureaucratic age, it is sometimes difficult to realise that the regulation of trade is not one of the inventions of a modern era. Rather, from the earliest times, the regulation of trade has been one of the results of the establishment of group identity. Thus the trade to Shetland and the Faroes was regulated by the court in Norway. In 1273, King Magnus Løgabøter (Law-mender) deprived the local Faroese authorities of their independence and subjected the islands to West-Norwegian law. In exchange, the king promised that at least two ships per year should come from Norway to trade and bring necessary supplies (Jackson, 1991:30). This change apparently also applied to Shetland (Friedland, 1985:87). The tie, in both cases, was to Bergen and the main trade item was dried fish. Joensen (1981:213) notes that it is difficult to assess the trade volume because of lack of records. He explains this lack in the following manner: while Bergen was the largest commercial centre in Norway, it was also the nearest centre of any size to the western island possessions and it was closely linked by family connections to those islands. The Faroese, in turn, had special privileges in Bergen because they could travel there without restriction. For Bergen, the trade to the islands was an internal matter outwith any of the laws governing external trade and thus not always a matter of record.

In 1296, trade from Bergen was opened up and the Hansa League was permitted to trade in Bergen for the goods originating in the western island possessions. Soon, however, the crown merchants were bringing to Bergen the goods they acquired on direct orders from Hansa merchants (Friedland, 1983:87-8). In 1343, Hansa merchants were permitted to build a warehouse in Bergen and, in 1361, they were allotted the same rights as Norwegian merchants in Norway (Joensen, 1981:213). The devastations of the "Black Death" (bubonic plague) in the last half of the fourteenth century brought severe disruption to production and trade (Jackson, 1991:30). At this same time (1380)

Norway and its possessions in Iceland, the Faroes, Orkney and Shetland came under the Danish crown but contact and control remained with Bergen.

By the end of the fifteenth century, trade had been expanded and subjected to the continual changes in regulations promoted and upheld by the British and Danish crowns and by the governing board of the Hansa League. The English were officially allowed access to Iceland (1490) and the Dutch, in the same year, had been granted rights in Iceland and Shetland. Shortly after 1400 the English had sought to expand their licence; a warehouse was built in Bergen and an official complaint was made to the Hansa (1416) about the fact that individuals had been sailing to Orkney, Shetland and the Faroes. Joensen (1981:214) notes that there is disagreement about whether Hansa traders actually went in person to Shetland or the Faroes in the fifteenth century. Friedland, however, suggests that, initially, it was Hansa merchants from Hamburg who dealt with the Faroe Islands and those from Lübeck who dealt in Shetland (Friedland, 1983:88). Direct trade with the western island possessions was still officially prohibited but was being pursued, perhaps even quasi-legally. The meeting of the Hansa deputies in Lübeck in 1416 had decided "not to allow trade to 'Orkenen, Hydland unde to Ver' [Orkney, Shetland and the Faroes]". A copy of the statute, however, had 'Vinland' instead of 'Hydland', and the Hansa claimed that 'Vinland' was actually Iceland. This meant that trade with Shetland was tolerated although not legally permitted (Friedland, 1983:88).

The official prohibition on the Hansa sailing directly to Shetland was to last until well into the sixteenth century. But, at the same time, the trade increased and became open, direct contact after the pledging of the islands to Scotland. The direct trade between Lübeck and Shetland ceased in 1645 (Friedland, 1983:90). The trade from Shetland to Bergen, on the other hand, continued until the eighteenth century but became more one-sided with the sailings originating in Shetland (Renaud, 1992:150). Other trading cities also became involved. In 1588, Hamburg sent two ships per year to Shetland and, by 1779, this number had risen to 26. The boats had a mixture of sailors and merchants on board who were anxious to buy butter, fat, wool, feathers and, above all, fish. Fish, in Shetland, were cheaper than in other areas and were thus much in demand (Friedland, 1983:91-4). Dutch boats were also present but these were involved in fishing.

Faroese trade in the same period remained under the control of Bergen 1524-29 and under the control of a Danish, Hamburg-based merchant, Thomas Koppen, from 1529-53. In 1536, the general administration moved to Copenhagen and the language of Faroese government became Danish – an East Nordic language. The Faroese population, however, continued to speak their west-Nordic tongue and retained their

oral culture. After Koppen, there was a period of freer trade when the Faroese themselves tried to trade directly with Norway in feathers and rough cloth [*wadmal*]. After 1569, trade was transferred by the Danish authorities from Bergen to Copenhagen. The official connections with Bergen were broken as was the contact with the Shetlanders who still traded there. Control was then exercised from Copenhagen directly. From 1619–1655, trade was conducted through *det islandske, færøske og nordlandske Kompagni* [The Icelandic, Faroese and Nordic Company] (Joensen, 1981:215-17). This was followed from 1655-1709 by the regime of Christoffer Gabel. What made the situation so attractive to these different organisations was the fact that they controlled the entire revenue of the Faroes in return for a fixed, annual fee paid to the crown. This was a system that was often abused (Jackson, 1991:33) and so steps were taken to ensure the maximum return to the crown. The Danish Royal Trading Monopoly was established in 1709, maintained until 1856, and this provided the Faroese with a reliable minimum of support, while also keeping the culture in a degree of isolation from influences other than those from Denmark.

This short overview of the legally controlled trading system shows decreasing opportunities for cultural interchange as the trading patterns gradually separate as they followed the patterns of political division. An interesting outside view of this is provided by Friedland (1983:86):

[Dutch maps as late as 1700] show Shetland and Orkney and the Faroes outlined between the Scottish and Norwegian coasts. A hundred years later the islands were no longer seen from the point of view of sea-trading merchants, and knowledge on the continent about the north began to deteriorate. Maps of the later years connect Shetland and Orkney rather with the British Isles, while the Faroes and Iceland were combined with Denmark and with the southern parts of the other two Scandinavian countries. A new edition of the same atlas in 1837 stressed still more territorial and dynastic divisions, printing only a small inset of Iceland and Faroe on the Denmark map: Shetland meanwhile was to be found only in the historical map.

B Piracy

Legitimate trade, however, was not the only trading contact. The ultimate in the illegitimate and one-way contact is piracy. Lucas Debes (1673) is reported to have complained that the Faroes suffered from frequent pirate attacks by French, Irish and English ships. It is known that two large ships (with a crew estimated at 500 men) from Algeria attacked Hvalba in 1629. They brought murder and mayhem and abducted thirty inhabitants. Scots, however, were also involved: it is alleged that a Scot by the name of "Klerck" was responsible for the siege of a trading post at Tinganes (Torshaven) in

1579 (Joensen, 1981:218). These contacts, however, were not conducive to positive forms of cultural interchange.

C Illegal trade (smuggling)

One of the greatest problems with the controlled trade was that it was subject to the nature of the superintendent. In 1619 in the Faroes, the dishonest bailiff, Strange Madssøn, was removed from office and the Faroese threatened to bring suit against him and his Bergen consortium – although this threat was dropped when the next bailiff threatened to pursue cases against smugglers (Wylie, 1987:28-9). Other, less controllable factors were the weather and the success of the fishing. When either or both of these worsened, the economic wellbeing of the Faroes was threatened. As this happened quite often, it is not surprising that frequent recourse was made to smuggling and an illegal barter system. The proximity of the foreign fishing fleets (see below) made this approach feasible. The American anthropologist, Jonathan Wylie, estimates that in this period, according to his research, "practically everyone smuggled" (Wylie, 1987:29).

The first reports date from about 1580 and it appears to have gone on quite openly even in 1620 when the culture's foremost men (judges, lawmen and priests) were just as involved as humbler men. The trade went from village to village and from island to island, providing mostly beer and brandy. The ships that appeared to provide most of these goods were Scottish and English. These smuggling ships came regularly and were well known to the Faroese. One captain is even reported to have left his son in the Faroe Islands and to have picked him up on a trip the following year (Joensen, 1981:222). In 1617, Faroese fishermen complained to their king in Denmark that "a great crowd of Scottish ships" had been in the habit of fishing in the Faroese fjords and harbours to the detriment of the local, Faroese crews (who at that time only fished close to the shore). The Faroese were rightly concerned for their livelihood but the result of their petition was somewhat more than they had in mind. The king, Christian IV, with an eye to the protection of his own revenue from import taxes, contacted King James VI and I, his brother-in-law. The result was a law in 1618 that forbade British fishermen from fishing within sixteen sea miles of the Faroes.¹ The law was widely disregarded and the Faroese themselves noted their "astonishment" that they were not supposed to trade with foreign fishermen on the open sea beyond the sixteen-mile limit (Wylie, 1987:30-31). Needless to say, ships involved in smuggling after that date stayed clear

of Torshaven and sought safer harbours elsewhere. Dutch ships were then observed to be trading in Vágur and in Suðuroy. In a letter from the exchequer (dated 17th April, 1620) the Faroese were strongly reminded that they should not trade outwith The Icelandic Company (the contemporary, authorised, trading consortium) neither with the English, Dutch, Scots, Germans, Danes, Norwegians or any others and neither on land or on the sea (Joensen, 1981:222). There was obviously a wide selection of smugglers to choose from. Joensen also notes that this directive, like so many others, appears to have made little difference. One notable trading instance he mentioned is the English emigrant ship on its way to New England that anchored for four days in order to trade at Vágur and for a further week to trade at Westmanna (Joensen, 1981:222). This was highly illegal; otherwise it might be seen as an aspect of the transit trade.

The smuggling role of the Dutch in the last half of the seventeenth century became increasingly important.² Part of this has to do with the rising importance of the Dutch fishing fleet and also the increased demand in Holland for woolen goods (e.g. knitted stockings) which were a standard product of the Faroe Islands. The unofficial trading was of great utility also to the Faroese: not only could they barter for desperately needed items (as well as for small luxuries) but they could often do so with items that could not quite meet the quality requirements of the official trading company (Joensen, 1981:222).

Joensen gives numerous examples of Dutch smuggling and general trade. The pressure from British and Dutch ships became so intense that, in 1673, permission was given to trade with foreigners if basic necessities were not involved (Joensen, 1981:224).³ Some idea of the volume of this barter trade may be gathered from the 1740 grounding of a Dutch boat in Iceland. It was found to have on board some seven thousand pairs of Faroese, knitted woolen stockings. This has to be set against the fact that, in the 1770s, the export of Faroese stockings through the Royal Monopoly was estimated at eighty thousand pairs per year (Joensen, 1981:225). This smuggling continued until the end of the Royal Monopoly in 1856.

Even after a general relaxation of the situation, the legalities remained for Scottish boats. Halcrow notes that the Scottish fishing boat "Ann" in 1823 had a penalty clause inserted in her fishing agreement that "forbad smuggling and prescribed severe penalties for being found in possession of dutiable or contraband goods". This apparently meant that the "Ann" was bound to fish in the waters off the Faroe Islands, "then as ever a smugglers' paradise for brandy, scents and tobacco" (Halcrow, 1950:95-6). It is difficult to say how many boats made similar journeys because they were short trips and "very spasmodic otherwise they would have been featured in the reports of the Fishery Board" (Goodlad, 1971:133).

The above comments on smuggling provide some details on Scottish-Faroese contacts that existed after the political separation of Shetland from Scandinavia. It is difficult to gauge, however, how much opportunity there might have been for the boat crews to be entertained at a Faroese ballad dance and / or to offer some songs of their own in return. More prolonged contact, however, was probably available to those involved in the transit trade.

D Transit trade

Joensen notes that the slow changes in Danish government attitude towards the connections with foreigners in the period 1750–1850 resulted in the institution of a transit trade (Joensen, 1981:226). Jackson details the start of the enterprise:

[This happened] when the tax-haven and main British smuggling centre based on the Isle of Man closed down in 1765 after the [Scots] Duke of Atholl sold up. Ryberg [the Danish merchant, Niels Ryberg] saw his chance and set up a transit-depot in Tórshavn in 1768 and staffed it with Manx, Irish and Scottish smugglers to take the contraband to Britain. (Jackson, 1991:34)

According to Jackson, Ryberg also employed 16–18 coopers who were Scots or Danes. Joensen describes the legitimate trade that accompanied this 'unofficial' business. There was transit trade between England and America which dealt chiefly in tobacco, brandy and tea. According to Joensen, Ryberg also had a tobacco mill and was associated (officially, after 1772) with the herring and salt cod fishery and trade. These fish were dispatched in his own ships to the Baltic, and to Spain and other Mediterranean countries. He had no direct trading with the Faroese but many Torshaven inhabitants worked at Ryberg's depot and many villagers came to the town in order to join the work force. Many foreigners were also employed and these people had a meeting hall in the Quillingsgarði. In some years, fifty ships would arrive at the depot in Torshaven. Some brought goods to trade while others came to collect goods to distribute from this duty-free store. There was, apparently, a great deal of contact both on land and sea between the Faroese and the foreigners (Joensen, 1981:226). Joensen may have called this a duty-free transit trade, but it is noticeable that the business ceased to exist in 1788 – the very same year that the British government reduced the duty on tea and that smuggling, in general, declined.

It is difficult to state categorically that the Faroese were exposed to Scottish ballads during this period. Jackson notes only that the Faroese gained experience "in all sorts of crafts like coopering, carpentry, ship-building, fish-curing and office-work,

besides being exposed to English speakers" (Jackson, 1991:34-5). It is indeed true that a typical Scottish evening entertainment of this period, as it was pictured in contrast to earlier Shetland entertainments, was likely to consist of card-playing, alcohol drinking and Scottish dancing (Hibbert, 1891:563). In mainland Scotland, the ballad was no longer danced and, in Shetland, it was increasingly rare. But ballad dancing still ruled in the Faroes and the Scots on Ryberg's staff (who presumably understood Faroese) would have been exposed to it.

FISHING

H.D. Joensen quotes from Zachariasen that Scottish fishermen first appeared in Faroese waters in the last half of the sixteenth century (Joensen, 1981:219). By 1600, however, there were more English boats than Scottish. As the years passed, French and British boats were in the habit of stopping in the Faroes to pick up extra crew members for the journey to the Icelandic fishing areas. These men were returned to their homes when the boats turned south again. This situation was so common that the Faroese knew the names of boats and skippers (Joensen, 1981:219). Jóan Joensen has another Faroese view of this aspect of the fisheries. This research in the Faroese archives has shown that there is only scattered information on the number of Faroese who crewed on Shetland boats. Once again, as in the case of the British Fishery Board records, crews on short fishing trips in the ares of the islands themselves were less likely to be recorded than those on the longer fishing expeditions. Oral history, however, according to Joensen, gave out that it was not at all unusual for Faroese to crew on Shetland boats and there is indeed a history of increasing difficulty of skippers' gaining full crews in Shetland. The numbers were not large but enough for the Faroese to gain experience in the Shetland fishing style. Apparently a number of people also learned English from the Shetlanders – although this was perhaps a by-product of the trade of selling wilks (for bait) to the Shetland boats who called at the islands in order to buy (Joensen, 1975:20-21).

Complaints about foreign fishermen were quite frequent. In 1615, in one such complaint, the boats that picked up Faroese crew were pointed out to the king as being inoffensive and as providing warning of pirate attacks. Their offense of intruding into local fishing grounds was not mentioned (Joensen, 1981:219). This was not the case with the complaint in 1617 about "the great crowd of Scottish ships" (mentioned above) which occasioned the sixteen sea mile exclusion zone of 1618.

A Torshaven court case of 1618 seems to indicate that the Scottish boats made landfall. The case concerned a disturbance of the peace created by two "well-known" women associated with the brothel "Hellige Boud" [holy house]. Among the many

insults traded were the terms *Baadzmandz hore* [boatman's whore], *schodtzke* [Scottish] *rijlle* and *skodttzke flagh* (Joensen, 1981:219). Joensen's notes (1981:241) point out that the terms "rijlle" and "flagh" may be found in the *Scottish National Dictionary*. The term "rijlle" or "rylle" appears as "ruil" – "an awkward, female romp" and "flagh" or "flaag" is defined as "A large, clumsy slovenly woman: an abusive term for a woman, ca. 1500 of uncertain origin." ⁴

In 1776 – 1777, a consortium including Faroese undertook to catch herring and cod off Iceland, Faroes and Shetland. Later, in 1791, men from Hvalvík attempted to get a boat to fish in Faroese waters. They claimed they had sailed with English fishermen for a number of years and were the only Faroese to have tried deep sea fishing (Joensen, 1981:220). Mention was made above of the anti-smuggling clause included in the regulations for the Scottish boat "Ann" in 1823 referred to by Halcrow. Goodlad also mentions the incident and points out the popular tradition of the quality of *Færa brándi* (Goodlad, 1971:133). Goodlad notes increased Shetland activity in Faroese waters during 1835 – 1839. As evidence, he quotes Governor Pløyen's complaint that London boats were fishing at the Faroes for Scalloway [Shetland] merchants while the Faroese themselves did nothing (Goodlad, 1971:133,135). Around 1850, there again was notice of the number of Shetland boats in the Faroes and of the Faroese who sailed with them and with other Scottish boats for the remainder of the nineteenth century (Joensen, 1981:220).

There are few references to ballad singing at sea, and these involve only the Faroese. Joensen cites the comments of an old sailer who complained that there was no dancing room on the luggers (because so much space was taken up by engines and machinery). It appears in oral history that there was ballad dancing on special occasions on the older sloops (in the 1870s) – on deck in good weather or in the middle compartment of the hold if there were sufficient room. It was also said that if sufficient dancing room were not there, that did not prevent the reciting or chanting of ballads. On the fishing boats with a sail, it was considered unlucky (and thus forbidden) to sing songs about death and drowning, or even ballads that dealt with the sea – such as "Harra Pætur og Elinborg" (see chapter 9) (Joensen, 1975:105). Unfortunately, however, we have no information about ballad singing or dancing on the boats that carried both Scottish and Faroese crew members.

After the dissolution of the Danish Royal Monopoly, the Faroese in 1872 started their transition to deep sea fishing by buying old British fishing boats. The first of these was the sloop "Fox" which was bought from a port on the East coast of England by three men from Torshaven. This event was important on both sides of the

sea: for Shetland it meant the start of the decline of the cod fishery on the banks of Faroe as the Faroese increasingly came to dominate the area.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND WAR

In 1816, the Faroe Islands became a Danish county under direct rule from Copenhagen and a series of progressive Governors opened the islands to modernisation. Christian Pløyen (Governor from 1837 to 1848) looked to Scotland for assistance and brought three Faroese to Orkney and Shetland in 1839 for instruction in fishing. Additional instruction in farming was also offered. The geographic similarities of the Faroes and Shetland were not the only reason for the exchange for we should also include the factor of language. Pløyen himself later wrote about the dialect of the Shetlanders, who spoke English "mixed with many words of Norse origin and which I would not have understood, if I had not known the Faroese tongue". Even the rise and fall of the intonation reminded Pløyen of Faroese (Ployen [sic], 1896:198).

The Second World War and the occupation of the Faroe Islands by the British armed forces brought significant contact between the geographically neighbouring countries. On the positive side, the troops did provide the Faroes with an airport and improvements in the road system. This, in turn, however, had a negative impact on ballad culture as was mentioned in greater detail in Chapter 2. The directly negative aspect, as far as this same culture was concerned, was the sheer weight of numbers and their preference for other, "more modern" forms of entertainment, as my Faroese informant put it. She also, however, mentioned the corollary of this occupation, the arrival of Faroese war-brides in Scotland. Their numbers were not large – only a few sprinkled around Scotland and a few more concentrated in the Glasgow area.

Another area of contact during the period of the war, according to my informant, was the delivery of fish to the Scottish market by Faroese fishermen. Many Scottish fishermen had been called up to the services and the Faroese sought to fill the gap. Sadly, a number of the Faroese boats were sunk by the Germans. It would appear, however, that neither the occupation and the war-brides nor the activities of the wartime fishermen contributed to the ballad culture of either country.

CONCLUSION

I have looked for Scottish–Faroese contacts that might have facilitated the passage of ballads after 1468. Concerning mainland Scotland and the Faroes, there is almost nothing to be found. The Faroes held little interest for non-fishing Scottish communities that had turned their attention south to London and overseas to the British colonial possessions. Shetland, like the Faroes, was on the periphery where people fished and farmed. Yet there were differences also here for fishing was always uppermost in Shetland but not so in the Faroes. In 1801, approximately 85% of the Faroese population gained their measure of support from agriculture while only 1% did so from fishing. By 1911, 18.4% of the Faroese lived by agriculture while 52.9% did so from fishing (Wylie, 1987:126). The Faroese had learned much in the way of deep sea fishing from the Shetlanders. Whether or not they had also exchanged anything concerning ballads remains to be seen and will be pursued in chapters 7–12 where the parallel examples of international ballads are compared.

NOTES

- ¹ This distance was supposedly the sight distance from land.
- ² Joensen reports that Sverre Dahl noted, concerning the site of an archeological excavation in Trongisvágssjørd that it was a general store of the 1600s. The fittings appeared to be Dutch and the store itself was either English or Dutch and it was possible that it had been run by smugglers (Joensen, 1981:223).
- ³ An example of non-necessity must surely be the action of the village of Eiði which, in 1662, sent its cracked church bell to be recast in Holland (Joensen, 1981:224).
- ⁴ In modern Faroese, "flagd" means a female ogre or troll.

CHAPTER 5

Ballad collection in Scotland and in the Faroe Islands

In this chapter, I intend to look briefly at the history of ballad collection in Scotland (in general), in Shetland (in particular), and in the Faroe Islands. These individual studies will be followed by a concluding overview.

Ballad collection in Scotland

Ballad collection in Scotland, as in the Faroes, was originally inspired by antiquarian interest and a desire to preserve cultural identity. Child remarked in a letter to Grundtvig on January 24th, 1880 that "The Scot loves his ballads but is very incurious about them." (Hustvedt, 1930:283) That was Child's opinion but I do not think that this is totally true. I have described ballad collection in Scotland as having occurred in three waves (Fischer, 1995). The first of these was indeed antiquarian. The 1724 publication of Alan Ramsay's *The Tea Table Miscellany* was a commercial success and stimulated demand throughout the United Kingdom for 'Scots' songs in a more anglicised, and thus more generally understandable, form. But it was the appearance of the English Bishop Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765), with its considerable Scottish content, that was strategically important for the study of ballads. In particular, Percy was one of the first to distinguish between traditional and other types of ballads. After Percy, the ballad was taken seriously as history and literature. Percy also praised the Scottish borderlands as ballad territory and this implanted the idea that such ballads were treasures worth preserving.

Many Scots made an effort to follow this example. David Herd published his *Ancient and Modern Scottish Songs* in 1776 and it, and his manuscripts, were distinguished by their careful transcriptions and fidelity to received texts. Many such texts were re-worked by Robert Burns and Sir Walter Scott.¹ Scott also did much to gain support for balladry by his skilful use of ballads and legends in his *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* and in his later novels. His views on balladry, as enumerated in the introduction to the 1830 edition of the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, were interesting. He saw the traditional ballads as being a surviving variety of medieval minstrelsy which came to an end of its creativity in the sixteenth century. He had no

time for ballad commonplaces, for repetitions or for the appearances of the same wording in more than one ballad. These are all the things that we recognise today as an integral part of traditional song. He despised the contemporary broadside ballads, and was loud in his praise of the older songs for their simplicity and for the way they preserved the legends, superstitions and manners of the past (Scott, 1902:1-54). For Scott, the ballads were an entry to a past way of life.

Another important collector and publisher of this period was William Motherwell who, in 1825, took over the editing of the anthology *Minstrelsy Ancient and Modern*. His work was noted for its insight into the oral processes in ballad composition and the fidelity of texts to oral tradition. It is to be noted that 12% of the texts in Child come from Motherwell. We know intimate details about Motherwell's collecting habits and his development as a folklorist and fieldworker from the almost 700 pages of his manuscript and from the 178 pages of his notebook. He understood that a ballad is the product of a certain singer at a certain time and place, and that, for these reasons, it should be collected in the field. An example of this was the attention he gave to the texts he collected from the weaver's daughter, Agnes Lyle of Kilbarchan.

Motherwell was not the first to follow this line of enquiry as Robert Jamieson in 1783 had concentrated on the repertoire of Mrs. Brown of Falkland. It is with Motherwell, however, that we get a clear insight into fieldwork techniques. He failed, though, to recognise that tradition could create and re-create as well as preserve. For Motherwell, since the age of minstrelsy was gone, so was the possibility of the creation of new ballads. "There is nothing left to gather" was a thought of that time and it has been a constant theme in the collection of oral tradition in Scotland.

Although there were other important collectors of the time, such as Peter Buchan, Andrew Crawford, and George Ritchie Kinloch, this first wave of ballad collection in lowland Scotland had come to an end by 1830-1840. Most of the attributes of modern folkloristics had made their appearance – the differentiation of the ballad from the folksong, the collection of tune along with text, the acceptance of the need for fieldwork, the collection of oral tradition from primary tradition bearers and the principle of the inviolability of the text. Observance of these principles was not universal though the basis had been well laid for future investigations.

By this time (1830-1840), however, the nature of Scottish society was different. Industrialisation and social upheavals had brought great change in Glasgow and Edinburgh and the people in those cities no longer saw much relevance in the old ballads. New songs, such as those from the music halls, appeared and spread out over the countryside to overlie the old songs.

What I have chosen to call the second wave of ballad collecting was stimulated again from outside the borders of Scotland. As the first wave had gained momentum from the work of Bishop Percy, this second wave was inspired by the English founders of the Folksong Society and by Francis James Child, an American professor from Harvard University.

Much has been written about the Child collection and how it has become the virtual canon in ballad studies. I feel no need to add to that in the present work. As mentioned in Chapter 2, however, Child considered his harvest of Scottish ballads in Shetland to have been rather scanty. In the broader arena, he had also had "disappointing results to his Appeal to the people of Scotland in 1873" (Hustvedt, 1930:288n). He seemed to feel that little or nothing (i.e. new ballads) remained to be discovered in this way. An abundance of new versions, however, were revealed at the start of the twentieth century by the collections made in the north-east of the country, a relatively homogeneous farming area, by Gavin Greig and James Duncan. The fact that they gathered 3500 texts and 3300 tunes gives some idea of the size of the old 'underground' song culture. The so-called 'Child ballads' formed 13% of the total and these were edited by Alexander Keith and published in 1925 as the *Last Leaves of Traditional Ballads and Ballad Airs* – once again there was the notion that nothing of interest remained to be found.

Greig and Duncan started their collection in 1904, worked as a team, met seldom but communicated regularly by post. Their views were similar: both understood that what people in their area sang was not what was in the song books and probably never had been. (This is exactly what was discovered in Shetland at a later date; see below.) They understood the implications of oral transmission and its combination with written texts and new compositions. Both believed in recording exactly what they heard and of including the tune with the text. They also understood that folksong should not just be preserved for its aesthetic value – but also for the insight it provided into the psychology, the emotions, the social customs and language idioms of the people (Shuldham-Shaw, 1981, 1:1x-x111). Greig's views on the subject appeared in articles and in his many newspaper columns. It is only now, however, that a definitive edition of the Greig-Duncan (GD) collection is being published under the general editorship of Emily Lyle and the late Patrick Shuldham-Shaw.

The juxtaposition of these two great ballad collections (Child and GD) is in a way symbolic of the movement that was happening within Scottish ballad studies. Child was an American, his collection included English versions and English ballads, and it was controlled and printed in America. It might have appeared as if Scottish ballads had become the raw materials of colonial exploitation (Bold, 1999). What was

not evident at the time and is only now being made clear (ironically by an American scholar) is the extent to which Child relied on the contributions and expertise of particular Scots. Two of those merit mentions: William Macmath was the foremost of the collectors upon whom Child relied for "ferreting out versions in Scotland as the basis for each new entry." (Brown, 1999a: abstract). The role of William Walker was even more significant as he had an extensive exchange of letters with Child from 1890 until Child's death. Brown has determined from a study of both sides of this correspondence that:

Child reveals that he is monumentally tired of the entire production, that he really doesn't intend to do much with the introduction (whatever his earlier intentions might have been), how he worked (with slips of paper), how little he knew and how much he still had to learn about the content of the material on which he had spent so much time. Walker is, like virtually all the Scottish contributors / correspondents, selfless, willing to do all he can to aid Child. Volume 5 of the ESPB owes much to Walker's diligence. Walker does all the giving, the responding, the sharing, even initiating the exchange of photographs which occurred shortly before Child's death. Walker, in this correspondence, is THE expert. (Brown, 1999b)

Walker lived on to work with Greig and Duncan and is thus a human link between the collections. The GD collection, in contrast to the American aspects of Child, signalled the re-emergence of the Scottish perspective; Child is to be put in a fully Scottish context. There are different approaches to this: William Montgomerie, for instance, chose to investigate the contents of ballad collections both known and (generally) unknown out of a conviction that we had to know the inventory before we could plan the exhibition (Montgomerie, 1954). Important collections not included in Child – such as the Crawford Collection – were edited and published (Lyle, 1975-96). Others, such as the Glenbuchat Manuscript are awaiting completion (Moriera, 1999). Even the ballads and songs of the 'fabled' Carpenter collection (made, mainly in Aberdeenshire, by an American, James Madison Carpenter, between the mid 1920s and 1930s) are now being returned to Scottish singers and scholars (Bishop, 1999). At the same time, attention has been paid to the repertoire and milieu of particular singers and informants (McCarthy, 1990).

While much of this scholarly research and publication has been in progress, we have had a third wave of collection, stimulated from within Scotland itself and based on a continuing, active tradition of oral transmission. In Scotland we have had, for over 200 years, a class of people who travelled the roads in the manner of gypsies. Although they are not Romany, they do have an element of that culture in their society. They were a despised minority, shunned by most 'respectable' people, and they kept

their own culture to themselves. The scholar and poet, Hamish Henderson was one of the first to breach this barrier: he recorded extensively amongst the travellers and others followed in his wake. One of the finds of this period was a version of "The Two Brothers", concerning which Child had written: "All the Scottish versions were obtained within the first third of this [19th] century, and since then no others have been heard of" (Child, headnotes to ballad no. 49). The social conditions in Scotland at that time (1950s) were also favourable for a revival of interest in national traditions. A period of rapid change, of dislocation and instability had brought a rising interest in political independence for Scotland. Here, once again, the collection of ballads and folklore had political implications. It remains to be seen whether the 1999 institution of a Scottish parliament will have an effect on ballad culture in the way that the recent American film *Braveheart* has had on other aspects of Scottish self-consciousness and culture.

Ballad collection in Shetland

A closer look at ballad collecting in Shetland, however, shows a different picture.² As indicated in Chapter 2, very little remained of that ballad culture shared with other West-Scandinavian areas; for, like the Faroese but unlike the Icelanders, the Norn singers had not committed their folk culture to writing. Child had hoped to find Scottish ballads in Shetland because, he reasoned, the Scots had controlled and settled the islands for more than three centuries (quoted in Harker, 1985:116). As already noted above, he found only *King Orfeo*. Otherwise, he repeated the claim of an informant that the clergy had made a point of "destroying any relic of antiquity in the shape of tradition or ballad" (Harker, 1985:116).

As I noted in "The Sangs A'll Sing ta Dee: Song Traditions in the Shetland Islands"³ later collectors had similar experiences. In the first volume of *The Shetland Book* in 1947, E. Reid Tait remarked that the newly established Shetland Folk Society had been successful in collecting fiddle tunes but lamented that there did not appear to be many folk songs or lullabies (Tait, 1947, 1:xii). Alan Bruford, the ethnologist, and Peter Cooke, the ethnomusicologist, from the School of Scottish Studies, University of Edinburgh both observed a lack of inclination to sing (Bruford, 1986:97, Cooke 1999).

The people of Shetland, however, did have Scottish songs. Thirty years ago many of these were to be found in the repertoires of some of the older informants - presumably singing what they had learned in the first half of this century. Thus James Laurenson of Fetlar could, in 1970, provide Alan Bruford with "Saw ye my Maggie?" As Bruford wrote in *Tocher* (2:35) this could be a Fetlar version of a Scots song

otherwise lost. The comparison is with "Saw ye nae my Peggy" – number 11 in Johnson's *The Scots Musical Museum* and the bawdier version by Burns in the *Merry Muses of Caledonia*, "both of which seem to be literary parodies of an original folksong probably much more like Mr. Laurenson's" (Bruford, 1970:35). In addition, Laurenson could also offer "The Winding Sheet" – a fragment of Child 155 ("Little Sir Hugh") and "As I cam rollin home frae sea" – a version of Child 274 ("Our Goodman") (Bruford, 1975:92,102); and "Lord Ronald" – a version of Child 12 ("Lord Randall").⁴

To claim, however, that all these songs have a direct line of descent from the original settlers would be foolhardy. For the fact remains that, although Shetland looks to be on the very edge of continental Europe, it is, rather, at the centre of the northern oceans and the rich fishing areas. The enormous Dutch fishing fleets of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries summered in Shetland and were active, at the same period, around the coasts of the Faroe Islands. At later dates, the islands were a way-station for the Greenland and South Georgia whale fisheries and their seamen were active participants in those as well as in the British Merchant Navy. Visitors and returning residents alike brought songs to the islands over many centuries as they do to the present day. But such songs and / or ballads are little in evidence.

There are songs in Shetland dialect: Bronwen Cohen noted the stress on the use of Shetlandic dialect in prose, poetry and song writing by those 'intellectuals' who fostered the movement for regional identity in the late 1880s and 1890s. (It is interesting to note that this is also a period of linguistic renaissance and activity in the Faroese islands – see below.) Many of the Shetlandic songs can be found in *The Shetland Folk Book*, an occasional publication of the Shetland Folk Society (founded in 1945). In 1973, however, the Society did publish a volume called *Da Sangs At A'll Sing Ta Dee*. In it are many songs whose authors are known and were often members of the Society. There are 60 songs in Shetlandic but only 11 of them are noted as being 'traditional'. Of these 11, 2 are spinning songs, 2 are lullabies, one is a dandling song, 1 is a nonsense song, 2 are Child ballads (or remnants thereof), 2 are sea or fishing songs and one is the old New Year's song "St. Mary's Men".

An examination of the repertoire of traditional singers shows a similar paucity of traditional ballads. In 1973, Alan Bruford of the School of Scottish Studies, copied the song notebook of Mrs. Elizabeth Smith in which she had noted the songs she had heard between 1900 and 1951 and wished to remember. There were 21 different songs plus a couple of tunes. Three of the songs were in Shetlandic, four in Scots and the remainder in stilted ballad English or the more relaxed language of the music hall. Six of the songs concerned the sea while the majority of the rest could be called

'broadside' ballads. One Shetlandic song, "Beremael an' Burstin" was her own composition based on a fragment from Foula (SSS SA 1973/58/B8). As she explained, she "ekit on bits to it", and the so-called traditional song "The Norrowa Wheel" received similar treatment at her hands (SSS SA 1973/58/B9). The 1959-73 repertoire of James Laurenson of Fetlar shows a mix, similar in many ways, but more extensive. He also included Victorian drawing room songs (e.g. "O Mary do not weep for me"), comic songs, local diddled dance tunes (e.g. "Windyadepla "and "Hjogrovaltar"), standards, such as "Barbara Allan" and some lesser known ballads such as "Lord Randall", as noted above.⁵

The collections from Mrs. Smith and Mr. Laurenson are similar to those recorded from a wide variety of informants throughout the islands and are very typical of what might be found anywhere in Scotland or even in the wider reaches of the British Isles as many English and Irish songs are included. It is noticeable that very few of the songs printed in the *Da Sangs At A'll Sing Ta Dee* songbook are included (an echo here of the views of Greig and Duncan in Aberdeenshire, see above). These songs are, however, regularly performed on special occasions, for example, at regatta concerts.

In the 1970s and 80s, the ethnomusicologist Peter Cooke visited Whalsey. This island has remained a strong fishing community and much of the repertoire is of sea songs and the locally composed songs concern shipwrecks. While there, Cooke found two occasions when the local reluctance to sing disappeared. The first occasion concerned the house-visiting custom when a fishing boat has finished the season, the fish have been sold and the crew have received their pay. The crew then visit the home of each crew member in turn and receive suitable refreshment. Most of the songs were sea songs – either of local composition or brought in from other ports. This custom of singing on 'settlement days' was also noted by Anthony Cohen (Cohen, 1987:74). The second occasion was in a large kitchen where a squad of men was engaged in the traditional preparation of mutton for a village wedding meal. In addition to sea songs, there was also a considerable number of 'broadside' ballads in this repertoire (Cooke, 1999). Of greater interest, however, is that fact that Cooke also told me that he had noticed that the texts he collected on Whalsey (1971-73), for the archives of the School of Scottish Studies, were longer than those appearing in the Greig-Duncan Collection. He also found a number of conservative texts that were similar to those in the 18th century collection of David Herd. This exceptional role of Whalsey as a somewhat hidden reserve of song was confirmed by a recent official enquiry into the status of music in Shetland. This report lamented the lack of solo singing in the county and

noted that Whalsey is the only area having a number of such singers (Campbell, 1997:12,21).

Ballad collection in the Faroe Islands

In looking at the development of ballad collection in the Faroe Islands, I am here approximately following the pattern of events and personalities employed by Svend Grundtvig (Chesnutt, 1992b). When Grundtvig applied to the Directorate of the Hjelmstjerne-Rosencrone Foundation on 17th October 1872 for financial support to permit the compilation of the *Føroya Kvæði: Corpus Carminum Færoensium*, he included a short history of ballad collection in the Faroes. In the first instance, Grundtvig pointed out that research *should* be conducted in the Faroes because it had followed a different pattern of development: its social structure was democratic rather than aristocratic, and its literature, unlike the historical, written riches of Iceland, was oral and preserved along with the dance and other old customs (Chesnutt, 1992b:177).

Lucas Debes, a Danish-born priest in the Faroes in 1673 published a description of the islands which mentioned both song and dance but omitted to give any detail about either. The actual first collecting of Faroese ballads involved the sending of five texts in Faroese language by the Faroese, Hans Rasmussen, to the Danish Dr. Ole Worm in 1639. Dr. Worm was a Norse philologist who appears to have been aware of Faroese ballads. This should not be surprising, as Denmark was very early aware of its own ballad treasures and some of the oldest extant ballad manuscripts are from the hands of members of the Danish upper classes. Examples of this are, for instance, the manuscript known as "Karen Brahes Folio"⁶ which was first written down some time well before 1583 (Gardner-Medwin, 1976:24). In addition, the first printed volume of Danish ballads was the *It hundrede vduaalde Danske Viser* [One hundred selected Danish Ballads] edited by Anders Sørensen Vedel in 1591. Unfortunately, the manuscript that Worm received from Rasmussen no longer exists and it is believed to have been lost in the Copenhagen fire of 1728 (Conroy, 1974: 45). It is only known from a mention in Peder Syv's 1695 edition of *Et hundrede udvalde danske viserforøgede med det andet hundrede* [One hundred selected Danish ballads .. augmented by another hundred] and in quotations in Syv's private papers. Even though the references in Syv's own handwriting are not lengthy, the songs are said by Grundtvig to be recognisable and the language form used to be in accord with that still in use [1872] (Chesnutt, 1992b:177). Further details on these points are

covered by Jón Helgason in his 1924 article, "Færøiske studier". He notes that in Worm's private papers, there is correspondence with two priests in the Faroes – Hans Rasmussen and Lucas Debes. These letters mention only acquisitions for Worm's museum and not for his library. It is certain that the ballads were received by Worm in 1639 but there is no trace of communications with Rasmussen at that particular time. On the other hand, it is extremely possible that the letter collection is not complete (Helgason, 1924:29).

The connection between Syv and Worm is made more certain in Syv's collected papers.⁷ Here, there is a section entitled "Icelandic and Faroese Songs" and the Icelandic versions are notated as "*A Magno Olavio 1633 transmissæ et enodata priscorium cantilenæ*" [Songs of bygone days sent and elucidated by the great Ole, 1633] (Helgason, 1924:31). Concerning the Faroese pieces, Helgason notes that the remains of the communication from Worm consist of one whole verse, four-half verses and two verse lines. From this, Helgason observes that the five ballads sent might be identified as "Koralds kvæði", "Torsteins kvæði", "Hermundr illi", "Samson's kvæði" and "Berrings vísa" (Helgason, 1924:31-35).

It was well into the eighteenth century before we again find that actual texts were recorded. In this case it was by the son of a Faroese priest, a student of natural history and economics at the University of Copenhagen. Jens Kristjan Svabo (1746-1824) had had an early interest in the Faroese language and, while a student, had prepared a draft of a dictionary of the hitherto unwritten tongue. He, however, laid that aside in favour of his career and published small texts on farming and fishing. In 1781-2, he was seconded to the Faroes to compile a physical-economic description of the islands with reference to their natural resources, economic conditions etc. His massive report was never published during his lifetime (it appeared only in this century, see Svabo, 1959) and he was denied any official employment appointment. He died in 1824 after a life of great poverty. He occupied his time, however, with work on his Faroese dictionary, copies of which have survived although it was never published. During his first trip to the Faroes, he had recorded the text of folksongs from the best singers he could find and, on his return to Copenhagen, he was commissioned by the Crown Prince (later King Frederik VI) to provide a fair copy at a cost of 2 marks a sheet. The total cost for the 52 ballads thus recorded in 3 quarto volumes was 50 Rix dollars and the manuscripts are preserved in the Royal Library in Copenhagen (Chesnutt, 1992b:178). Svabo's transcriptions of the ballads (and the basis for his dictionary) was his own, invented orthography which was phonetic in nature thus showing clearly how the words were pronounced⁸ – unlike the present, official orthography based on work by Hammershaimb.

Svabo, in his introduction to the work he delivered to the Crown Prince, is quite clear about the value of ballads in the Faroes. He notes that he had asked that a search be made for the missing manuscript of Dr. Worm. In particular, he asked the Chamberlain, Hr. Suhm, whether it was in the library that had been founded especially to encourage learning. Svabo was informed that it was not in that library. A search at the Academy Library was equally unsuccessful (Chesnutt and Larsen, 1991:28). Svabo also had clear ideas about the value of transcribing Faroese ballads and why it should be done without delay. He felt that they appeared to be on their last breath and that song students of the future would not find any trace of them if they were not recorded (Chesnutt and Larsen, 1991:28). He goes on to point out that they are indeed appropriate material for libraries. After all, such libraries already contained volumes such as the *Koran* which he felt are of little general use in the Northlands. The ballads, furthermore, were international and contained the names of people and places from throughout Europe. Some of them, in addition (to repeat an often heard claim), were reputed to have come to the Faroes in an enormous, leather book. Svabo also observed that he had heard that the late Prime Minister Bernstorff had proposed to send Johannes Ewald to Scotland to record Ossian's songs among others, for the benefit, it was hoped, of Nordic antiquarians. This, however, had not come about (Chesnutt and Larsen, 1991:29-30).⁹ Grundtvig comments that, despite Svabo's work, there was no reaction in Copenhagen and Faroese ballads appeared to be "overgiven til forglemmelse" [consigned to oblivion] (Chesnutt, 1992b:179).

Hans Kristjan Lyngbye (b.1782) was a specialist in the study of algæ who travelled to the Faroes on a State project in 1817. Lyngbye himself noted that there were stormy days when it was not possible to carry out his research. During that time, he visited an old man who dictated ballad after ballad to him and was given a day's pay for his effort. At the same time, Lyngbye went to the 'learned' Svabo for language instruction. In this way, he came in contact with the "Sigurds Qvad" (in standard Faroese, "Sjúrðar kvæði") [Song of Sigurd] which "although I knew nothing of the worth of the poem nor of its connection to the Icelandic sagas, interested me because of its shadowy memory of a bygone reading." (Chesnutt and Larsen, 1991:40)

The "Sjúrðar kvæði" were made public. Professor P.E. Müller saw them and recognized them as a previously unknown, popular version of the ancient tale of the Volsungs. Müller was an influential man and managed to arrange State financial aid to the amount of 500 Rix dollars to support publication. With some additions provided by J.H. Schrøter¹⁰ of Suderoy (see below), Lyngbye's collection was published in 1822 as *Færøiske Qvæder om Sigurd Fofnersbane og hans Æt* [Faroese ballads about Sigurd the Dragon Slayer and his Race]. As Lyngbye was not a linguist and his

knowledge was limited there were mistakes in the way he treated his material but his raw data still exist (Chesnutt, 1992b:179-81).¹¹

A local churchman in the Faroes, Dean Henze, had been asked, along with Schrøter, by officials in Copenhagen to collect and send Faroese ballad texts. Henze passed the task to a literate farmer on Sandoy, Johannes Clemensen, a serious student of song. He must have learned to write Faroese from Svabo because he used Svabo's phonetics (Chesnutt, 1992b:180). At a much later date, a short autobiography of Clemensen, in his own handwriting, was found in a manuscript which also contained psalms and prayers. Here, Clemensen noted how Henze had been asked by the Chancellery to gather as many Faroese songs as possible and how he, Clemensen, undertook the task:

Many of them I myself knew, and the others I gleaned from several old men in this whole district, until the number of them exceeded 100 and the number of verses was more than 10 thousand.....I also kept a copy, not for my [own] sake, but for the young people of the future so that they will be able to see what young people of the past had in the way of songs to delight them for dancing; instead of today's youth [who delight] so little in this. They [the songs] have nearly gone out of use, for youth's enjoyment nowadays mostly consists of drinking brandy and singing songs about whores. I wrote them [his collection] down in a book and again for a fourth time when Vensel Hammershaimb asked in 1849. (Chesnutt and Larsen, 1992:129-30)¹²

(The above is similar to a postscript to his songbook written in 1831.)

Clemensen sent Lyngbye some 18 ballads which are still preserved in the Royal Library. Clemensen kept on collecting on his own account and, in 1822, he transcribed 93 songs on 431 pages of his book. With each song, he also recorded the year and day of the interview, the gender of the informant(s) and their location. This book was the famous *Sandoyarbók* which was later purchased by Grundtvig (Chesnutt, 1992b:180).

The work that Patricia Conroy has done on the analysis of the *Sandoyarbók* and Clemensen's informants provides us with a clearer picture of the situation in the parish of Sandoy. This parish itself was composed of the islands of Sandoy, Skúgvoy and Dímun. Sandoy was the main centre of population and the village of Sandur, where Clemensen lived, was the largest village (in fact the second largest settlement in Faroe after Torshaven). Clemensen himself was known as "Jóannes í Króki" after his father's farm of "í Króki", where he had been born. One of the first things that Conroy brings up is the question of Clemensen's health. It is noticeable that much of his life was dogged by ill-health and that the bulk of his ballad collecting was accomplished in a window of good health between 1821 and 1833. Indeed 85% of the collecting was done from February 1821 to April 1823 during the late winter months when outdoor

work was minimal and ballad dances were more frequent. It is unlikely, however, that Clemensen recorded at dance sites *per se*; more likely it was done at later solo sessions (Conroy, 1987:24-6).

Despite Clemensen's claims that he had collected "alle, man her omkring vidste at give navn" [all of what people hereabouts knew the name of], he did not visit every house. Conroy's analysis of the register of informants shows that they were either his own relatives, neighbours, friends, or relatives of these two latter groups. In Sandur itself, however, his best informants – those from the upper class Royal tenants' houses – were neither his relatives nor close neighbours. Conroy also feels it is likely that at least seven of the ballads "were provided to Clemensen by highly literate informants" who collected the texts from people who lived outside the parish (Conroy, 1987:26).

There are also some clear distinctions in the type of ballads provided by various groups of informants. For example, ballads collected from those outside Sandur village tradition were predominantly long, the "pride and joy of their singers", and thus sought out specifically by Clemensen (Conroy, 1987:27). The most interesting sociological factor concerned the fact that within his own village, Clemensen's best informants (whether actually born in the village or elsewhere) were from the upper classes. Such households, of course, were exposed to a wider view of tradition. But the informants were not the major householders, but rather junior relatives displaced because of the system of inheritance by primogeniture. Conroy makes the point:

For these younger brothers leading the village dance was to exercise symbolically the power and authority that had been denied them through primogeniture. It was indeed these men who devoted a great deal of their time and energy to learning, maintaining, and performing their repertoires of ballads. (Conroy, 1987:30)

The role of the four female informants is also examined. All the women had come to the village of Sandur as wives or servants. No collection was made from women who were born in the village. Conroy points out that this was probably due to the role women played in the ballad dance. Men were the ones who acted as foresingers and had the acknowledged right to public performance of the family's ballads. Women assuredly knew the texts as they heard them frequently at the *kvøldseta*. Thus it was that women who were away from their birth village, and their subservient role to their male relatives, could sing ballads not otherwise known in their new home (Conroy, 1987:31). The contrast here with Scotland is quite startling for women were major informants and played a vital role in the transmission of Scottish ballads to the collectors.

In fact, there appear to be quite a few things that Clemensen did not record. For instance, no ballads whatever were recorded from his close neighbours at the farm named "Pállinshús á Heyggi", even though they were known to possess the extensive cycle "Ílints tættir", the collection of which was accomplished by Mortan Nolsøe many years later. The neighbour in question, Hendrik Hansen was later well known for his ballads (Conroy, 1987:33-4). Personally, I am not so surprised at this omission: ballad ownership tends to be a well-guarded treasure and Hansen may have refused Clemensen's request – or Clemensen may simply have known better than to make a request. Also missing from the collection are many of the satirical ballads "tættir" or sub-ballads, that were known to be circulating at that time. This raises the question as to whether Clemensen and his informants censored some of their ballads (Conroy, 1987:34).

Be that as it may, Conroy still hailed the *Sandoyarbók* as "the most intensive collecting effort undertaken in any one Faroese district during the nineteenth century" and "the single most useful source for the study of the workings of an early nineteenth-century Faroese ballad community" (Conroy, 1987:23).

Johan Henrik Schrøter (1771-1851) was a priest on Suderoy who had provided Lyngbye with the most important materials for his book (see above). His father was the German-born surgeon in the islands and Schrøter himself was well versed in the Faroese language. He continued his collection, after his arrangement with Lyngbye, and sent some of the results to the Nordic Antiquarian Society, and some, in 1844, to Grundtvig himself. The greatest part, however, on loose sheets largely unread, belonged in 1874 to Hammershaimb, whose work is discussed below (Chesnutt 1992b:180-1).

Others were to follow the example of Clemensen. Several years later, on the northernmost island of Fugloy, another farmer by the name of Hans Hansen, wrote down the songs he knew by heart or could get from his neighbours. Apparently, the first two songs in his folio book were in Clemensen's handwriting – so he was active in his encouragement (Chesnutt, 1992b:180). This manuscript, the *Fugloyarbók*, contained 96 songs (some in Danish) and was later in the possession of Hammershaimb as a gift from H.D. Matras. Bound into the copy of the *Fugloyarbók* are several pages of comments from Matras to Grundtvig about Hansen. According to Matras, Hansen lived near him, loved to write and sing ballads and was beside himself with desire to collect as many Faroese ballads as possible for his book. Some of the ballads are copies of already collected versions but some others are straight from oral tradition. Many wanted the book from him but he would not part with it. Matras apologised to Hammershaimb for the condition of the book for it was old and dirty,

used for many years and written by an uneducated man (Chesnutt and Larsen, 1992:137).

A 3-volume collection was also made in 1840-51 by the doctor, Napoleon Nolsøe, and it contained some pieces found nowhere else, as well as copies of Svabo's, Clemensen's and Hansen's work. This aspect of "scribal interaction" or "textual interdependence" brought recent comment from Chesnutt. He observed that we can not always know the sources in some manuscripts (exempting those of Svabo, Clemensen and Schrøter) and that this had had an effect on the *Corpus Carminum Færoensium* because Grundtvig treated each ballad version as an autonomous oral variant. Thus,

the systematic separation of primary from secondary versions is a task still waiting to be carried out. This again means that it is perilous to generalize about the primary oral form of the Faroese ballad tradition, not only because questions of variation and stability may be distorted by concealed processes of copying but also because there is some evidence that a compiler such as Napoleon Nolsøe took stylistic liberties with his texts - with much the same motives as the Brothers Grimm retouched their folktales. (Chesnutt, 1992a:252-3)

According to Grundtvig, the greatest contributor to Faroese language and song, the one who continued the work of Svabo, was Venzel Ulrik Hammershaimb. His father had been the head of the local government and he was related in typically involved Faroese fashion to both Svabo and Schrøter. Hammershaimb had a life-long love of his fatherland, its language and oral literature. While a theological student at the University, he became involved in Nordic philology and comparative linguistics. He was in the Faroes in 1847-8 and again in 1853 to record songs and other orally preserved folk memories, and to make a closer study of the linguistic dialects. The result of these journeys was the basis of his excellent Faroese grammar book. From 1846, he published in journals on Faroese songs, stories, proverbs etc., as well as some pieces on linguistics. In 1851 he published his first volume of ballads, *Færøiske kvæder* and his *Sjúrðar kvæði*, in 1854, his complete *Færøiske sproglære* [Faroese Grammar], and in 1855 a second volume of *Færøiske kvæder*. He then became a parish priest in the Faroes and his duties allowed him some time to further his collection and to revise what already existed (Chesnutt, 1992b:182). In 1891, he published 2 volumes of *Færøsk anthologi* and this was an effort to make some of the material which was included in the *Corpus Carminum Færoensium* available to the general public (Conroy, 1974:49).

Grundtvig was somewhat critical of Hammershaimb's eclectic approach to collecting but full of praise for his grammar and his orthography (Chesnutt, 1992b:182-3). The orthography nowadays (1999) is under criticism because of its lack

of phonetic relationship to the spoken language. It was modelled on classic Icelandic for political reasons, specifically including a proud connection with an ancient Norse heritage. Hammershaimb's promotion of ballads was also connected with this same political situation. As the pronunciation has evolved even further from that of Icelandic, there is pressure to reform the orthography as has already been done several times in Denmark. It is doubtful that this action would actually stimulate the reading of Faroese ballads in the original language by non-Faroese speakers as, for many scholars, it is the similarity to the classical models that allows for even vague comprehension.

Grundtvig states that he got in touch with Hammershaimb in 1843, in order to learn Faroese^{1 3} and get to know the folksong collections as an aspect of his work on the monumental *Danmarks gamle folkeviser*. He kept in touch with Hammershaimb and consulted him about Faroese parallels to Danish texts. Hammershaimb was not able to make much progress with the Faroese collection during the following sixteen years and finally, with Hammershaimb's consent, Grundtvig took over the project. Grundtvig had owned part of Schrøter's copies in addition to minor recordings from other collectors and the *Sandoyarbók* which he had bought. Other manuscripts were available in libraries so that sources were assured. Hammershaimb had also promised to track down anything that was left (Chesnutt, 1992b:183-4).

Grundtvig wrote in detail to the Hjelmstjerne-Rosencrone Foundation directors concerning how he proposed to organise the project, the help he was to receive from Jørgen Bloch [his brother-in-law] and the support he could expect to receive from others such as Sophus Bugge in Kristiania [Oslo]. Grundtvig admitted that he had originally intended to produce the *Corpus Carminum Færoensium* by his own labour and at his own expense. His wife's illness, and the necessity that she spend part of the year in a warmer climate, however, had made this impossible. He was, therefore, applying to the Foundation for 500 Rix dollars support annually for five consecutive years – 300 dollars to go to Bloch who was to work 3 hours a day for 300 days a year, and the remaining 200 dollars for Grundtvig himself (Chesnutt, 1992b:185-6). Grundtvig was successful and financial support from the Hjelmstjerne-Rosencrone Foundation was forthcoming. A further report on the progress of the work was made to the Foundation and this gives a history of the project up to the date of Grundtvig's death on 14th July, 1883. The structure of the work is set out, the fact that new versions were continually appearing was noted and an extension of the financial support was arranged (Chesnutt, 1992b:190-1).

From 1872-1889, Bloch worked on the project closely following Grundtvig's guidelines and the result was 16 volumes of handwritten texts. But the job of compiling the *Føroya Kvæði* was greater than could have been realised by the first

workers. Later, in 1896 and 1905, Bloch added two supplements – one of which included the collection which Jakob Jakobsen (of fame in Shetland) had made on the island of Suðeroy. The unpublished work was lodged in the Royal Library in Copenhagen, as per the intentions of Grundtvig, but included in the holdings of the Dansk Folkemindesamling [Danish Folklore Archives] after that was founded in 1904 (Chesnutt and Larsen, 1991:23). The Universitetsjubilæets danske samfund which was responsible for the publication of the *Danmarks gamle Folkeviser* started on the publication of its Faroese counterpart in 1941. This edition, *Føroya Kvæði: Corpus Carminum Faroensium*, was under the general editorship of the Faroese philologists Christian Matras and Napoleon Djurhuus. Work stopped in 1972 after the publication of the then final volume number 6. A major problem with the work was that the indexing was insufficient to cover the multitude of primary sources (Chesnutt and Larsen, 1991:24). Co-operation among the Institute of Folklore (University of Copenhagen), the Faroese section of the Arnamagnæ Institute and the language section of the Faroese Academy resulted in the production of a seventh volume in 1996 under the editorial guidance of Michael Chesnutt and Kaj Larsen.

Another problem with the CCF is the fact that Grundtvig normalised all the texts. In this way any variations in regional dialects are lost. Also lost is any indication that Faroese is, in fact, a language showing a great deal of "grammatical instability" (Barnes, 1978). Conroy has pointed out that several publications have since sought to rectify the loss of dialectical variation. Thus Christian Matras has published two diplomatic editions of ballad manuscripts, *Svabos færøsk Visehaandskrifter* (1939) and *J.H. Schrøters Optegnelser af Sjúrdar Kvæði* (1951-53). Rikard Long (1968-82) also published a diplomatic edition of Jóannes í Krókis *Sandoyarbók* in two volumes. Volume 1 is mentioned by Conroy (1974:49).

Collecting has continued but the format may have changed as more recent compositions and collections have favoured the "Tættir" rather than the "Ballad" (see Paturson, 1952 and Johannesson, 1966, 1969). There has also been an annual *táttur* collecting competition sponsored by the Fróðskaparsetur Føroya (at least through the 1980s).

Concluding overview

An attempt to compare ballads from Scotland and the Faroe Islands has to put each in a broader context. Scottish ballads are well known and have been made readily recognisable by the work of Francis James Child. In this connection, it is interesting to recall that Child was in frequent communication with Grundtvig while the latter was

working on his editions of the Danish ballads. On February 17th, 1872, Grundtvig wrote to Child that he was: "as you know, in possession not only of all the as yet unpublished greater part of my collection of Danish ballads, but also of all printed and a great many unprinted, Swedish, Norwegian, Icelandic and Faroe ballads, some of which are only different versions of English and Scottish ones." (Hustvedt, 1930:244).

Even today, however, few are acquainted with these Faroese texts. Some have praised them highly. For example, W.P. Ker saw the Faroes as "a refuge of the old songs" and felt that ballad singing there "always had a larger share of importance among the literary and intellectual tastes of the people than anywhere else in the world." (Ker, 1908:283-4) Steenstrup was even more emphatic on this point: "But in the Faroes and in Iceland the popular ballads were taken up, far more so than in other lands, by the priests and the cultured people, who had been immersed in the literature of antiquity, and consequently had become very familiar with it." (Steenstrup, 1968:163).

On the other hand, it has been recognised by scholars such as Michael Chesnutt, that this highly-praised tradition was not as continuous as might have been assumed. The old, epic ballads had fallen from popularity in the face of imported Danish or music-hall songs. They had also been the subject of a calculated revival as a tool of political / cultural nationalism after the late 1880s (Chesnutt, 1992:258).

It is, however, true that the ballad *has* played an important role as the accompaniment to the Faroese ballad dance which is the sole survivor of the ring or line dances found throughout medieval Europe.¹⁴ But this was a symbiotic relationship with ballad survival also assisted by a dance in which fidelity of textual reproduction was extremely important. As de Vries described it: "The ballads remained all but unchanged precisely because here the text of the dance song, rather than the melody, was the main point. It was essential for anyone who recited such a poem to do it as completely as possible if he did not want to be caught out for inaccuracy by the listeners who had heard the songs all too often." (de Vries, 1915:116-7).¹⁵

The Faroese ballad in and of itself has been studied by relatively few and the reasons for this may be twofold. Firstly, the Faroese ballad has been seen by many scholars as by-and-large derivative. This is partly due to the prominence of the Danish ballads in ballad literature. But it is not totally true for there are many ballads in the Faroe Islands that are strictly Faroese, e.g. TSB types A15 (CCF 54 – *Grímur í fjallinum*), A21 (CCF 135 – *Hindin*), A72 (CCF145 – *Riddarin Klæmint*), A75 (CCF 101 – *Trøllið í Áradal*), dominance in types E38-58 under the heading "manslaughter leads to revenge", etc. In this connection it is interesting to note a discussion between scholars who for many years disagreed as to whether Norway or the Faroes was the

more important source of the heroic and troll ballads that predominated in the West Scandinavian area. Iceland was excluded because it has developed a tradition in and of itself (see Ólason, 1982). Knut Liestøl, Sverker Ek and H. Grüner-Nielsen argued for a tradition based in Norway and spread out through Bergen which was the commercial centre for trade with the Faroe Islands (and also Shetland). Ernst von der Recke argued in favour of the Faroes. Solheim notes that this question was effectively answered by the catalogue of Scandinavian ballad types prepared by Bengt Jonsson, Svale Solheim and Eva Danielson. (The catalogue was later published as *The Types of the Scandinavian Medieval Ballad*, 1978). This very clearly showed Faroese dominance in the heroic and troll ballad types (Solheim, 1970). In the cases where the ballads are not indigenous but are clearly derived from an outside source, they have often been adapted to the Faroese cultural situation and have distinct characteristics that differentiate them from other West Scandinavian versions. This aspect of differentiation between West Scandinavian (Norway, Iceland and the Faroes) and East Scandinavian (Denmark and Sweden) is important as Parker has shown that it is in the West Scandinavian branch that the similarities with British balladry are greatest (Parker, 1952).

Secondly, the Faroese ballad has not generally been translated. A reading of Dal (1970) or Syndergaard (1995) indicates that English translations are few and far between and are all too often limited to prose translations which "capture the broad narrative or some significant section" but may, or indeed may not, produce a "valid poetic effect" (Syndergaard, 1995:23); prose summaries; or limited translations – as in two stanzas from a total of seventy or "1 stanza of 172; omits refrain" (Syndergaard, 1995: table 2. re: CCF 77). Syndergaard, indeed, provides a table that shows that only 37 of Faroe's 236 ballad types have had two or more verses translated. This compares with 259 out of 539 (Denmark), 98 of 110 (Iceland) and 71 of 260 types in Sweden (Syndergaard, 1995:4). Dal's list of translations into French and German has limited usefulness because it lacks detail. German scholars have also been more interested in the long ballads of older Teutonic origin (such as those concerning the actions of Sigurd) than in the shorter ballads of international distribution (Dal, 1970). With regard to the perceived need for more translations, Syndergaard puts the need for "verse translations of virtually any of the Faroese, Icelandic and Norwegian ballads" as the first item on his list of "Applications" (Syndergaard, 1995:41-2). The orthography is, by design, archaic (as noted above) and this also has restricted the access of non-Scandinavian speaking scholars.¹⁶ Those who have concentrated their study on the Faroese ballad, as opposed to Scandinavian ballads in general, have examined internal features.¹⁷

This is not meant to imply that there has been no consideration of Faroese ballads in articles in books, magazines or journals. Aside from the numerous articles by Andreassen, more have been written by Chesnutt (1992), O'Neil, (1970) and Patursson (1929), amongst others. Only the Faroese Mortan Nolsøe, however, has directly addressed the relationship of Faroese ballads to Britain (Nolsøe, 1982a).

What then, are the Faroese ballads? In the first instance, the ballads must be seen as a sub-set of the general Scandinavian ballad group which has often been noted to resemble British balladry.¹⁸ Dal sees this Faroese set as being composed of different layers of tradition with a West Scandinavian strand (shared with Norway and Iceland) considered to be older than the East Scandinavian strand (from Denmark). (Dal, 1956:415).

A different way of looking at this subdivision was the six-category organisational method employed by Grundtvig and Bloch for the *CCF*. Patricia Conroy feels that this was too elaborate since it was based on putative origin rather than on actual content, and she sees a four-fold division as being more logical. She combines the Grundtvig and Bloch divisions relating to the Sigurd cycle (Hammershaimb's *Færøiske kvæder II*) and the heroic ballads with "Nordic, especially Norwegian, motifs" into a single category of "heroic ballads with Germanic motifs". The remaining three divisions concern ballads with motifs from medieval legends of southern Europe (especially the deeds of Charlemagne [Karlomagnum] and his companions): "ballads of mixed motifs of either international or specifically Danish origin" and "satirical ballads and literary ballads" Conroy, 1974:29). The first-section ballads of the Sigurd cycle form an important part of Faroese balladry. An early, important study of these was the 1915 dissertation *Studien over færøischen balladen* by Jan de Vries in Haarlem and the ensuing differences of opinion over the age, sources, connections and worth of these ballads contributed much to the study of such Germanic texts.¹⁹ These ballads are not the subject of this study as there is no equivalent in Scotland. The same must be said of the ballads concerning the southern European legends - although their role in Faroese balladry is aptly summed up by the title of Mortan Nolsøe's article, *Mangt er sagt um Magnus konga* [Much is said about King [Karla]Magnus] (Nolsøe, 1981:30-45). The literary and satirical ballads also refer to Scandinavian or more particularly Faroese subjects and are without Scottish analogues.

We are thus left with the mixed motif ballads of international or Danish origin and these fall into two categories. On the one hand, there are ballads whether international or Danish which came via Denmark in oral form and were adapted to Faroese language. On the other hand, there are ballads which came from Denmark in written form with the import of the printed ballad collections of Vedel and Syv.

Conroy notes that these retained their Danish language form (and perhaps for this reason were omitted by Grundtvig and Bloch from their reckoning) and were so hugely popular that they "almost eclipsed Faroese ballads" in many areas and were performed even in the most conservative ballad strongholds. (Conroy, 1974:30). Mortan Nolsøe stresses this point when he quotes from Clemensen (1831) and Schrøter (1844) on the preferences of young people for something new in the ballad repertoire. (Nolsøe, 1982b:158). Perhaps another reason for their popularity was the fact that they were considerably shorter and thus easier to learn and perform.²⁰ Then, again, there is always an attraction in something new.

It is in this last section, the mixed-motif ballads of Danish and / or international origin, that we find the overlapping corpus that is the subject of the next chapter.

NOTES

¹ See Child's comment in a letter to Grundtvig, 6th February, 1881: "I *hope*, after much fruitless enquiry, that I have discovered the whereabouts of the Brown ballad MSS. used by Scott. If so, I shall not have need to quote W.S.'s improved versions" (Hustvedt, 1930:288).

² Orkney, by contrast, presents a picture much more like the situation found by Greig and Duncan. Bruford attributes this to the nineteenth-century influx of Aberdeenshire farm workers who came to the more fertile lands of Orkney (Bruford, 1986:96).

³ This is a brief summary of an as yet unpublished paper given as "The Sangs At A'll Sing Ta Dee: The changing voice of Shetland" at the International Ballad Conference (1995) in Brittany. Slightly altered, it was also given as "The Sangs A'll Sing Ta Dee: Song tradition in Shetland" at the American Folklore Society Meeting (1997) in Austin, Texas.

⁴ The tapes of these recordings can be found in the University of Edinburgh, School of Scottish Studies Sound Archives under the following numbers: "Saw ye my Maggie?" – SA 1970/246/B11: "The Winding Sheet" – SA 1973/62/A1: "Lord Ronald" – SA 1970/246/B10.

⁵ These items are in the SSS SA under the following numbers: "O Mary do not weep for me" – SA 1973/62/B17: "Windyadepla" – SA 1972/102/2: "Hjogrovaltar" – SA 1972/102/3: "Barbara Allan" – SA 1972/105/10.

⁶ This manuscript is preserved in the Landsarkiv, Odense.

⁷ According to Helgason (1924:30) these papers were collected, bound and held in the University Library in Copenhagen in Ms. Rostg. 21.

⁸ The clearest Scottish parallel to this would be the act of James Duncan in writing down the ballads of the North-east of Scotland in a shorthand which could accurately represent dialect pronunciation. Duncan, however, was a habitual user of shorthand and may thus not have been motivated by a desire for dialectal accuracy.

⁹ The original text of this (in Chesnutt and Larsen's transcription) states:

Man har fortaalt [sic] mig, at den sal. afdøde Stats Minister Bernstorff skal have havt i Sinde, at lade sal Joh. Evald rejse til Scotland for at optegne Osians og andre Sange, hvoraf en nordisk Oldgransker kunde haabe noget for Historien og Sproget, men til Uheld blev dette Forsæt iverskat. Hvor urimeligt kunde det da vel synes, om man fik det Indfald i Provindser, ja Afkroge under det [håndskriftet har det det] danske Herredømme at opsamle al muelig Oplysning i det gamle Nordens Sprog og Historie?

History is full of what might have been!

¹⁰ Faroese names have appeared in many different forms in the literature. I have a personal preference for the use of Faroese forms but, to avoid confusion, will follow the example of Conroy who chose to use Danicised forms as "they are found in the written sources of eighteenth and early nineteenth century" (Conroy, 1987:39 fn.2). Thus Klæmintsson becomes Clemensen, Hanus Hanusson (Hanusarsson) becomes Hans Hansen and Schröter is Schrøter.

¹¹ Lyngbye's handwritten manuscript was (as of 1992) in the Royal Library in Copenhagen. The handwritten materials belonging to J. C. Svabo, J. H. Schrøter, and Johannes Clemensen were also to be found there. The Sandoyarbók was (as of 1992) lodged in the Dansk folkemindesamling in Copenhagen, while the Fugloyarbók and the manuscripts of V.U. Hammershaimb are in the collections of the Arnarnagæ Institute.

¹² The text in Chesnutt and Larsen's transcription is:

Mange havde ieg vel tilforn selv lært, og de andre sankede ieg til fra adskillige gamle mend her om hele sysselet, indtil antallet af saadanne oversteg ethundrede hvis vers i det hele oversteg titusinde, og som for det meste atter [blev] igientaget efter revisor J. Nolsøe han(s) forlangende, hvoraf ieg ogsaa selv beholdt copie ikke for min skyld, men for den efterkommende ungdom, at de kunde see hvad fortidens ungdom havde til fornøielse at qvæde i deres dandstid, i stedet for at nutidens ungdommen saa lidet ved om disse, da de nesten vare gangne ud af brugen, men ungdommens fornøielse nu mest bestod i at drikke brendeviin og synge skiøgeviiser. Jeg skrev dem ind i en bog, og [har] deraf atter fierdegang udskrevet dem efter Vensel Hammershaimb(s) forlangende 1849.

¹³ In the Foreword to the 6th volume of the CCF, the editor, Napoleon Djurhus wrote that the original intention had been to distinguish particularly Danish linguistic forms in italic type. This idea had been abandoned when it became apparent that the very closely interwoven [*zusammengewoben*] relationship between the two linguistic forms made this approach impracticable.

¹⁴ It is, however, suggested by Jan de Vries that the original dance songs were short lyrical verses composed extempore by singers as the dance inspired them (de Vries, 1915:117).

¹⁵ The original text is:

Juist omdat de inhoud van het danslied en niet de melodie hier de hoofzaak was, bleven de balladen nagenoeg onveranderd bestaan, daar het voor iedereen, die zoo'n gedicht voordroeg, een vereischte was, dit zoo volledig mogelijk te doen, wilde hij niet door de toehoorders, die al zoo vaak die liederen hadden gehoord, op onnauwkeurigheid worden betrapt.

¹⁶ Some assistance, however, is provided by the use of the normalised text since the variations in the diplomatic editions compound the difficulty.

¹⁷ Conroy, 1974; Galvin, 1989; Andreassen, 1991; Schier, 1955.

¹⁸ By numerous authors but most prominently in F.J. Child and in Svend Grundtvig (DgF).

¹⁹ See Helmut de Boor (in his review of de Vries), 1923:104-114; and in his own dissertation, de Boor, 1917.

²⁰ Here we have an illustration of Roland Barthes' suggestion that the unity of a text lies "not in its origin but in its destination" i.e. what the community audience wishes is a stronger force than any individual in deciding what will be sung (Barthes, 1988:171).

CHAPTER 6

The overlap between Scottish and Faroese ballads

The fullest direct comparison of Faroese and British ballads previously available is Mortan Nolsøe's 1982 article "The Faroese Ballad and Britain". In fact it seems to be this very basic lack of alternative information on the subject that encouraged Nolsøe's writing. Another aim, indeed, would appear to be a desire to tie an almost-unknown, but very elaborate ballad culture to a British ballad tradition seen as a major influence in Europe and, through this, to reveal the Faroese as part of mainstream Scandinavian and European culture. For this reason, Nolsøe briefly describes the history, function and milieu of Faroese ballads before making short comments about the fourteen ballads he finds to be common to Britain and the Faroe Islands. According to the various tables of equivalence (DgF, Syndergaard (1995) and TSB), there are approximately 39 ballads in Child that have an analogue or parallel in DgF. 18 of these are found in the Faroe Islands, but only 16 in both Scotland and the Faroes (more than in Nolsøe's count). This conflation is indicated in Table 6.1. Although Nolsøe deals with Britain in general, only two of the ballads he considers, "St. Stephan and Herod" (Child 22) and "King Arthur and King Cornwall" (Child 30), are exclusively English (and thus excluded from consideration and from Table 6.1), the remaining twelve being found in Scottish tradition.

By 'common', Nolsøe means that the ballads in the two countries "represent either the same ballad type, or very close type parallels" or are "closely related thematic types" (Nolsøe, 1982a:45, 48). It is notable that all of the ballads mentioned by Nolsøe are contained in Volume 6 of CCF. In his Forward to this volume, Napoleon Djurhuus wrote, "Die Nummern 114-178 sind zum grössten Teil dänischen Vorbilds". [Numbers 114-178 are in the main from Danish prototypes] This is in keeping with my comments at the end of Chapter 5 on the limited range of ballads with cognates in Scotland and the observations made by Conroy (1974:30) and Nolsøe (1982b) on Faroese acceptance of Danish models and versions.

In this chapter, I intend to give an overview of all the Faroese ballads that have been judged to have Scottish analogues or parallels and to compare them briefly with their Scottish counterparts. There are two sections, the first of which deals with those parallels discussed by Nolsøe and the second with other possibilities that have been put forward. The following chapters will then consider four of these ballad pairs in greater detail.

Scottish Child no. & name	Danish DgF no. & name	Faroese CCF no. & name
4 Lady Isobel and the Elf Knight.	183 Kvindermorderen	
5 Gil Brenton	274 Brud ikke mø	
6 Willie's Lady	84 Hustru og mands moder 85 Hustru og slegfred	
7 Earl Brand	82 Ribold og Guldborg	
9 Fair Flower of North- umberland	249 Den trofaste jomfru	
10 The Twa Sisters	95 Den Talende Strengelæg	136 Hørpu ríma
12 Lord Randall	341 Den forgivene datter	
13 Edward	340 Svend i Rosensgård	
14 Babylon	338 Hr. Truelses Døtre	176 Torkils dötur
15 Leesome Brand	270 Bolde Hr. Nilaus løn 271 Redselille og Medelvold 272 Sønnens sorg 273 Stalbroders kvide	
20 The Cruel Mother	529 Bamemodersken	
21 The Maid and the Palmer	98 Maria Magdalena	150 Mariu vísa seinna
25 Willie's Lyke Wake	408 Hr. Mortens klosterrov 409 Hr. Karl på ligbåre	
41 Hind Etin	37 Jomfruen og dværgekongen	169 Signild og dvorgurin
42 Clerk Colvill	47 Elveskud	154 Ólavur Riddararós
43 The Broomfield Hill	81 Søvnerunerne	
53 Young Beichan	218 Stolt Elinsborg	158 Harra Pætur og Eliniborg
57 Brown Robin's Confession	376 Hr. Peders skriftemål på havet	
58 Sir Patrick Spens	375 Jon Remorsøns død på havet	77 Margareta kvæði (Nolsøe only)

Table 6.1 compiled from the analogue tables in Syndergaard, 1995:241-242 and CCF 8:137-150

59 Sir Aldingar	13 Ravengaard og Memering	166 Roysningur
62 Fair Annie	258 Skjön Anna	
63 Child Waters	267 Jomfru og staldreng	
64 Fair Janet	126 Kong Valdemar og hans søster	177 Kong Valdimann og Sofía
68 Young Hunting	208 Frillens hævn	
69 Clerk Saunders	304 De hurtige svar	124 Faðir og dottir
71 The Bent Sae Brown	416 Ridder fælder jom- fruens syv brødre	
73 Lord Thomas and Fair Annet	210 Hr. Peders Slegfred	159 Harra Pætur og Kirstin
75 Lord Lovel	446 Hr. Magnus og hans mø	
77 Sweet William's Ghost	90 Fæstmanden i graven	
89 Fause Foodrage	298 Svend af Vollerslev	173 Sveinur í Vallalíð
95 The Maid freed from the Gallows	486 Fæstemand løskober fæstemø	129 Frísa vísa
110 The Knight and Shepherd's Daughter	238 Tærningspillet 314A Hr. Tideman 314E Ebbe Galt	123 Ebbin kall
112 The Baffled Knight	230A-C I rosenlund 230D, E Ørnen sidder på højen hald 231 Den dyre kåbe	
253 Thomas o Yonderdale	253 Slegfred og brud	119 Brunsveins vísa
266 John Thomson and the Turk.	468 Kong David og Solfager	
268 The Twa Knights	224 Væddemålet	
269 Lady Diamond	94 Livsvandet 305 Hertug Frydenborg	
270 The Earl of Mar's Daughter	68A (21-49), B,C Ridderen i fugleham 68A (1-200), D,F Bejlergaverne	127 Flúgvandi biðil 146 Kongur og jomfrú

Table 6.1 continued

COMPARISONS DISCUSSED BY NOLSØE

The Twa Sisters (Child 10)

The first ballad to be considered (taking ballads in the order presented in Child) is "The Twa Sisters" (Child 10) and the Faroese "Hørpu ríma" (CCF 136). Child presents over sixteen versions or fragments found in Scotland and, at the same time, records that it is found in all parts of the United Kingdom and in all parts of the Scandinavian cultural area. There are, in addition, Scottish versions of this ballad that are not included in the Child corpus (see below). The Faroes Islands were reported by Child as having four extant texts of "Hørpu ríma" [Lay of the Harp] but seven whole or partial versions actually appear in CCF. There is also a similar kind of ballad in Slovakia and in the Baltic States. The story, in the form of a folktale, has an even wider circulation area. In all cases, the tale is the same – as briefly stated in the type study TSB A38:

An elder sister wants her younger sister's betrothed. She makes her sister go with her to the shore, pushes her into the water and lets her drown. The body is found (or in rare cases, grows into a tree) and a musical instrument is made out of it. The instrument is played upon the elder sister's wedding with the younger's fiancé. It reveals the bride's guilt, and she dies or is punished.

The distribution of the ballad in such general terms in the North Atlantic area has occasioned much speculation regarding paths of diffusion and dispersion. Nolsøe notes different theories of origin and dissemination. Liestøl held the ballad to be British in origin (Liestøl, 1909). Parker and Brewster, on the other hand, held the opposite view that the ballad had come to Britain from Scandinavia. For Brewster, the source lay in Norway (Brewster, 1953:81) while Parker was also interested in assigning some role to the Faroes as well as to Norway (Parker, 1951:360). This North Atlantic-wide distribution has also produced an interesting division in the musical instrument made and used in the ballad. In Denmark, the fiddle is the chosen instrument: in the Western Scandinavian areas of Norway, Faroes and Iceland, however, the harp is the choice. In Sweden, both instruments appear and this is also true of Scotland. Nolsøe also points out that this combination supports the theory that, if the Scandinavian ballad crossed the sea to Britain, it did so more than once and did so from both harp and fiddle areas (Nolsøe, 1982a:46).

The Scottish and the Faroese versions are both relatively short – by that I mean that two of the Scottish Child versions are of 28 two-line stanzas and none of the Faroese exceeds forty-two stanzas (very short by general Faroese standards). The

reasons for jealousy in the Scottish ballads appear to rest on the fact that the younger sister has a successful suitor – perhaps because she is fair whereas her sister is dun-coloured. In the Faroese versions this contrast between the girls is emphasised: the younger could spin linen, the elder waken swine; the younger could spin gold, the elder was unable to unravel wool (CCF 136A:3,4); the younger was gentle and shone like the sun at mid-day, the elder was so ugly she was a worm on stony ground (136A:8,9). (Unless otherwise indicated, the quotations are from Child 10B and CCF 136A.) The Faroese beauty does not help her own cause by pointing out to her sister:

Um tú tváar teg allan dag,
tú verður ei hvítari, enn Gud tær gav. (9)
[Even if you washed yourself all day long you would not get any whiter
than God created you.]

In both countries, the younger sisters are drowned on the seashore (although in some Scottish versions the drowning also occurs in a river): the Scots came to see "father's ships" or "the bonnie bows o London", the Faroese came to wash. Both drowning girls plead with their sister to save them:

"O sister, sister, save my life" (13)
"Kæra systir, hjalp á land!" (12)

They offer up gold, clothes and betrothed in vain.¹

O sister, sister save my life,
An I swear Ise never be nae man's wife. (13)

This idea is similarly expressed in Faroese:

Gjarna gevi eg tær alt, eg ár,
á biðlinum havi eg einki rað. (14)
[Willingly I will give you all I have, I have no wish to be married.]

In the Faroese ballad, the corpse is wafted around by different winds before finally being cast on the shore. In the Scottish texts, however, there is the most peculiar intrusion of the milldam episode. It has yet to be explained how the girl could drown in the sea and have her corpse fished out of a mill dam (though this is less of a problem for those drowned in a river). The eccentricity of such motif incorporations is not restricted to Child 10 and appears in a number of other ballads. A good example of this

is "Clerk Colvill" (Child 42) where the Scottish version includes a mermaid unknown elsewhere.

The Faroese versions generally state that the body was found by two men variously described as *pílgrímar* (versions A, B), *vallarar* (C), *alsingar* (D), *dreingir* (E), or *spælimenn* (G). *Dreingir* are simply 'fellows' while *alsingar* and *spælimenn* are descriptions that confer musical abilities. *Pílgrímar* and *vallarar* may both be translated as either 'pilgrims' or, more simply, 'travellers' (or even tramps) but have no connotations of musical ability. In the Scottish texts, retrieval of the corpse by the miller is followed by the arrival of a musician (harper or fiddler). In both traditions musicians construct an instrument and specifically use the drowned girl's hair as strings. In Faroese:

Teir tóku hennara gula hár,
gjördu harpustreingir smár. (21)
[They took her golden hair, used it for harpstrings.]

In the Scottish version:

He's taen three locks o her yallow hair,
An wi them strung his harp sae fair. (25)

The instrument is then carried to the next village where it is played at the wedding of the elder sister. In the Scottish case, three tunes are played (or play themselves) mentioning the king (father), the queen (mother) and a hint of the evil in the sister. The Faroese strings are more forthright: the first string plays "Brúðurin var mín systir" [The bride was my sister] the second plays "Brúður var mín bani" [(the) bride murdered me], and the third string plays "Brúðgómur var mín biðil" [(the) bridegroom was my fiancé]. This leads inexorably to the death 'of grief' of the Faroese murderess. In Scotland, however, the dénouement is generally left to the imagination – except that in versions D and F and K, the fiddle string asks that the sister be hung, version V asks that she be burned, and version O asks that she be drowned. Given that versions A, H and T say that the sister is guilty but ask no punishment, and versions B and C imply the same with a "Wae be to my sister..." line, the story would often appear to be unfinished.

Two versions from Crawford (Lyle, 1996,2: nos. 106, 137), however, also disclose the deed and call for action. No. 106, "The Bows o London", has the harp call out "Gae hame and hang my sister Allison". No. 137, "The Bows o London" requests "Gae burn my sister Eleson", which is accomplished in the next (last) verse:

Then out they brocht that gay ladie
And they burnit her hie upon a tree.

An added dimension is added to this if the versions in the James Madison Carpenter collection, made by an American in Britain during the 1920s and 30s, are also considered. The collection includes 19 versions of "The Twa Sisters", 17 of which were recorded in the north-east of Scotland. Atkinson (1996) feels that these versions have more in common, by way of characteristic motifs, with the general run of Scandinavian texts than do the average Child or Greig-Duncan texts (GD no. 213). Two points in particular are mentioned: the first is the revelation by supernatural means of the murder and an associated secular punishment of the guilty sister. Atkinson finds the association of these two motifs to be quite rare in Anglophone texts (see my analysis above) when compared to those of Scandinavia (Atkinson, 1996:64). The example he gives is from the version of Mrs. Mary Stewart Robertson:

They've taen her oot
an they've kill't her by fire
Heigh, ho, my Nannie O!
An they've burned her
tae the harpers desire,
An' the swan swims sae bonnie, O.

This, however, finds no echo in the Faroese texts published in CCF.

A second motif also displayed by this same Carpenter collection version is the desire of the bride to interrupt or silence the harper and the corresponding desire of her parents to hear what message is being played to them (Atkinson, 1996:65). In Faroese, there is no contribution from the parents but there is indeed an interruption by the guilty bride:

Svaraði brúður, reyð sum blóð:	The bride, blushed blood-red,
"Harpan ger os so mikið ólóð." (34)	spoke: "The harp gives us so much din."
Svaraði brúður, á beinki sat:	The bride, on the bridal seat,
"Harpan ger os mikið óglað." (35)	spoke: "The harp gives us so much grief." (version 136 C)

This effort to end the harp's message is unsuccessful and the result in verse 39 is:

Teir slógu sína harpu av móði,
brúðurin fleyt í blóði.

They ceased their harp from
weariness,
The bride was bathed in blood.

But her demise is generally described as: "brúðurin sprakk av harmi" – the bride died of grief.

Babylon; or, The Bonnie Banks o Fordie (Child 14)

The second ballad that has an analogue in the Faroese is Child 14, "Babylon; or, The Bonnie Banks o Fordie". In this case the Faroese ballad is "Torkils døtur". The story is summed up in the TSB B21 type headline: "Sister's murder by brothers avenged by father". This ballad exists in all Scandinavian areas, in Scotland and in the various languages of Provence and of northern Italy. The fact that this ballad has developed in two distinct ways is interesting and is one of the reasons I have chosen to deal with the ballad pair at greater length in Chapter 7.

The Maid and the Palmer (Child 21)

The texts of Child 21 "The Maid and the Palmer" or "The Maid of Coldingham" and CCF 150 "Marrfu vísa sienna" differ much more from each other than did the texts of Child 10 and CCF 136. The overall theme of the two ballads is the same but diverges as it develops: a sinful woman denies a drink to a man who requests it and the man then lists her sins and what her penance must be. There are two Faroese versions: Text A dates to 1800 (and is the source of the quotations in this section) while text B is about 50 years younger. The earlier text which predated the invention of the modern Faroese orthography is recorded in Danish with special attempts to capture the peculiarities of Faroese pronunciation. Both of these texts identify the man as Jesus who came to the river and found Maria washing. The ballad is rare in Britain: Child gives only a version from Percy and a fragment from Sir Walter Scott, neither of which name the characters. The exceptional version, "The Maid of Coldingham", from the Glenbuchat manuscript follows this example and refers only to the "Fair Maid" and to the "eldren man" (Lyle, 1995:120-21). Conran describes this Scottish ballad (including the Glenbuchat version) as "a rather eroded and idiosyncratic version of an international, and particularly Scandinavian ballad type concerning Christ's meeting with the woman of Samaria at the well" (Conran, 1997:211).

The initial requests for a drink are very similar although the Faroese one mentions a cup:

Giv mig drikke af kieren tin. (A 2)
[Give me a drink from your cup.]

where the Scottish version does not::

O gie me a drink o' your cauld stream. (2)

Both requests are refused, the Faroese cup is "ikke ren" [not clean] but her cupped hands are offered. The Scottish cup is lost and the woman swears further that "all her cups were flown to Rome". This rather odd line is explained by Buchan (1967) as being a faulty recollection of lines like those in the Percy Ms.

But an thy lemman came from Roome,
Cups and cans thou wold ffind soon.

The swearing in the Faroese text involves the woman's personal protestations of cleanliness and purity. The woman's past history is then revealed. In Faroese she is accused of having borne and buried three children: one each to her father, her brother and her religious confessor. This last, says Jesus, was the greatest sin. Maria then falls to her knees and asks for penance and absolution. The Scottish sinner makes no protestations of purity and the biblical aspects of the original story appear to be forgotten. She is immediately accused of the death of the seven babes she has borne. There is no listing of putative fathers, but instead a detailed catalogue of their places of concealment since "twa o' them in the garden dyke" can hardly be called a grave site.

The divergence of the ballads continues when penance is announced. Faroese Maria must wander for nine years, shoeless in the frost and snow:

Barfod, ved et Hovedlin, så skal du bøde for sinder dine. (A 14)
[Barefoot, with head covered (in a wimple) you shall atone for your sins.]

This penance is to be endured alone with the emphasis on repentance. The Scottish woman, however, suffers a stinging litany of sufferings in seven-year spells:

Ye'll be seven years a cocky to crow....
An seven years a cattie to maiw.... (10)

Ye'll be seven lang years a stane in a cairn....
An seven years ye'll go wi' bairn... (11)

Ye'll be seven lang years a sacran bell...
An' ither seven the cook in hell. (12)

Toelken called these "ironically juxtaposed inferences of sexuality and penance (Toelken, 1995:134). Child (1:230) attributed them to "transmigration or metempsychosis".

The problem with this analysis is that it assumes that the ballad is a "traditional oral variant". But Conran argues that it is no such thing but is instead an anti-Catholic parody or burlesque composed in the mid 16th century. He comes to this conclusion through another analysis of the way in which Furnival (editor of the Percy manuscript) had actually treated the text which is now the Child A version. Furnival claimed it was a burlesque. Against this, Conran sets an Irish tinker version, "The Well Below the Valley", published in 1969 by Tom Munnely (see Bronson, 1976:83-4). Here again, the story is a "bit worn down but complete" (Conran, 1997:212). Unlike the Scottish version but similar to the Scandinavian versions, the fathers of the babes are listed as the maid's father, brother and "Uncle Dan" (viewed by Conran as meaning the parish priest). This Irish version is then interpreted by Conran as being the survivor of a ballad which came from Scandinavia in the 15th or 16th centuries and was the basis for the later English and Scottish parodies. In this light, it was the traditional metaphors of abasement that became the surviving British penances – not through a surviving belief in the transmigration of souls but as a folk process, folk fantasy rather than folk belief (Conran, 1997:212-17).

The Scottish text ends with this spate of Hell fire and damnation. The Faroese text, in contrast, has Christ meet again with Maria at the end of the nine years. He praises her patience and atonement and grants absolution:

Det skal du have for tålmodighed din,
tjene Marie moder min. (A 21)
[For your patience in atonement, you will serve Mary, my mother.]

This is the major differences between the two approaches to the same theme: the Scottish emphasis is on the maid's lack of chastity while the Scandinavians emphasise forgiveness. (Buchan, 1967:104-105)

Clerk Colvill (Child 42)

Nolsøe's citation of Child 42, "Clerk Colvill", and CCF 154, "Ólavur Riddararós" is well merited as this ballad is widely distributed. The type, named "Elveskud" (after the Danish DgF 47), is also found in an extraordinary number of Scandinavian versions and analogues are found in many areas of France, Italy, Spain, Portugal and a number of central European countries. It has become a touchstone for attempts at determining ballad origins and diffusion patterns. The Scottish and Faroese texts of this ballad are the subject of Chapter 8.

Young Beichan (Child 53)

Much the same applies to the consideration of Child 53, "Young Beichan", and CCF 158, "Harra Pætur og Elinborg" (see Chapter 9). Nolsøe notes that CCF 158 belongs in TSB to "Ballads of Chivalry" and especially in the sub-section including folk motifs (Nolsøe, 1982a:47). Thus the source of the ballad is assumed to be Denmark which, for various reasons including the existence of a relatively stable aristocracy, appeared to specialise in that genre. Nolsøe is not certain, however, that the Scottish and Faroese ballads actually represent the same ballad type. He suspects they may rather have "independently got their subject from a common source, the well-known medieval British legend about Gilbert Becket and the Saracen princess who followed him from the Holy Land to London where he finally married her." (Nolsøe, 1982a:48)

Sir Patrick Spens (Child 58)

Nolsøe compares this to the Faroese "Margaretu kvæði" (CCF 77). This is one of the couples that he considers belong to 'closely related thematic types', in this case the interconnections of the Norwegian and Scottish royal families. "Sir Patrick Spens" is said to concern the loss of a Scottish ship and crew that were sent out by the direct order of the king of Scots. The common belief is that this ballad concerns the daughter or grand-daughter of Alexander III. The two princesses are readily confused. The daughter was conducted to Norway in 1281 for her marriage to King Eric but died soon after childbirth. Her daughter, The Maid of Norway, was summoned home to the throne of Scotland (and marriage to the heir of the throne of England) when Alexander III died with no other heir apparent. There are 18 versions or fragments included in Child. It is to be noted, however, that the connection with Norway and the return of a princess (in either direction) is found only in versions G, H (fetching from Norway)

and in the I of Buchan and Motherwell (taking to Norway) and J from the Harris manuscript (bringing from Norway). The ballad itself has been subjected to various tests of historicity and analysis of socio-political content. Coffin and Renwick mention a paper delivered to the American Folklore Society in 1960 in which G. Ellis Burcaw offered his conclusions that the story actually concerned a clan feud and a rather ingenious method of disposing of Sir Walter Spens (Coffin and Renwick, 1977:62-3). "Margaretu kvæði" is concerned with the the burning at the stake in Bergen in 1301 of a woman who claimed to be the Maid of Norway.² According to historical records, however, the young princess died in Kirkwall in 1290. It would appear that both ballads are the result of incorporations, consolidations and conflations. Nolsøe is seemingly captivated by these 'windows' into history but it is difficult to compare or contrast unlike subjects which, in addition, may or may not even be connected thematically or historically. The connection between these two ballads is noted in the table of analogues (Table 6.1) as having been observed by Nolsøe. The connection is not made in TSB.

Sir Aldingar (Child 59)

Again, in the case of Child 59, "Sir Aldingar" or "Sir Hugh le Blond" (the Scottish version), and CCF 166, "Roysningur", we are apparently dealing with a ballad of Danish chivalry. Nolsøe indicates that the commonality here is mutual cultural contact with a legend "told by William of Malmesbury about Gunhild, daughter of Cnut the Great, who was married to King Henry, later the Emperor Henry III, in 1306" (Nolsøe, 1982a:48). This claim is not without opposition (see Dal, 1956). The situation, however, appears to be much more complex than this opening statement would indicate. I have chosen not to write a full chapter examination of the Scottish and Faroese texts, because of the exhaustive nature of the monograph written by Christophersen (1952) and the excellent article on the Scottish ballad "Sir Hugh le Blond" by McAlpine (1996).

The great strength of Christophersen's work is the depth of his research in the Romance literature into tales that have a theme similar to that of the ballads. From this he teases out several strands which he believes have left their mark on the British and Scandinavian ballad versions and explain their complicated, multi-level nature. A somewhat simplified overview of these lines of influence is presented in Figure 6.2. The initial suspicion that this research in older related genres is overdone is dispelled when the reader realises that the town of Spire referred to in the Faroese text is the German Speyer (on the river Rhine, south of Mannheim) associated with the early

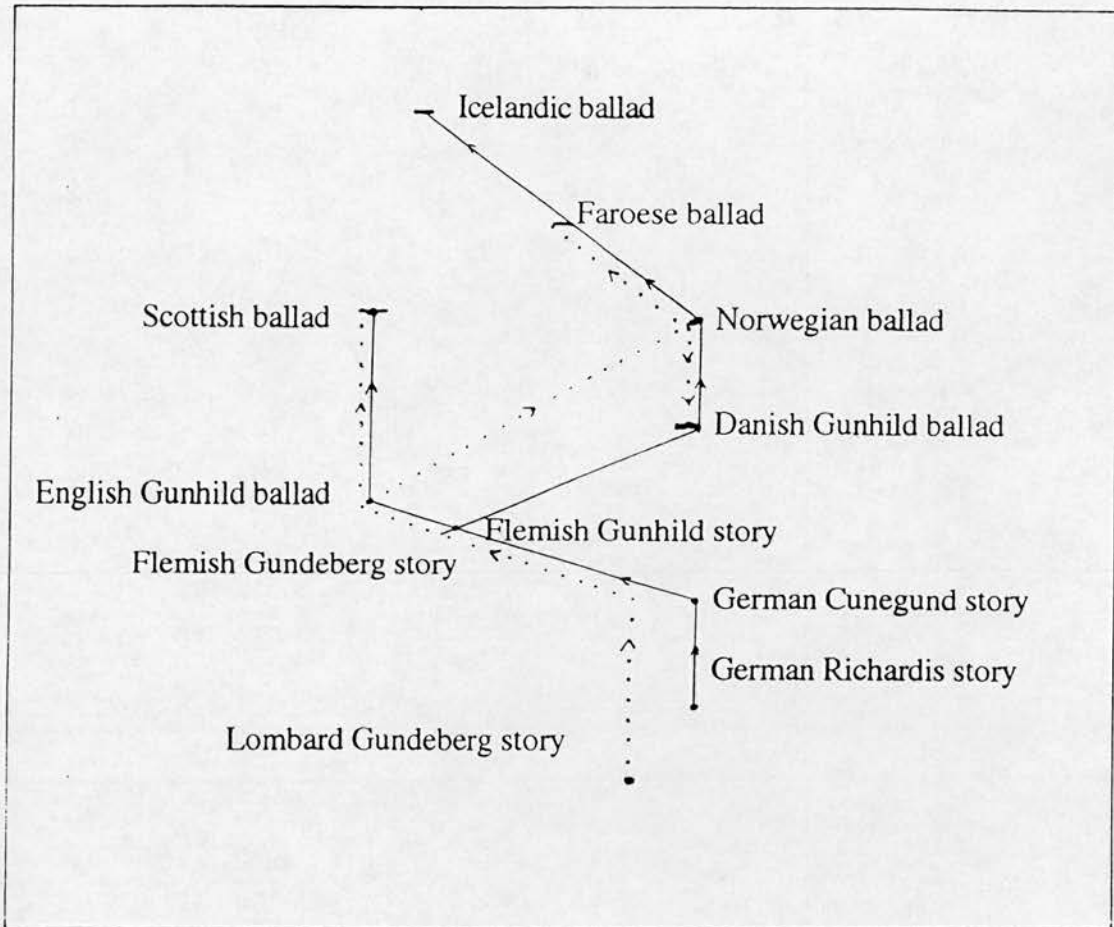


Figure 6.2 Lines of influence affecting "Sir Aldingar" (Child 59)
(Christopherson 1952:108)

Salian Emperors. Thus the early literature traces are seen to be relevant to the surviving texts. Another amazing feature of this ballad type is the variation in the nature of main motifs. An example of this is the variety of methods used to verify the queen's innocence.

The story of the calumniated wife is ancient and probably was already so when it was written in the 13th chapter of Daniel in the Bible as the story of "Susanna and the Elders". Christophersen called it "a theme central to human nature" (Christophersen, 1952:102). On a general basis, Christophersen also noted that the modern (post Percy) British ballads show no resemblance to the Scandinavian ballads other than the use of somewhat similar names (Christophersen, 1952: 109) and this most certainly applies to the Scottish and Faroese examples.

The Faroese ballad starts with a wedding (as do many of the Scandinavian versions):

Tíðrikur reið sær undir oy,
 – *roser, ville I mig love* –
 festi hana Gunnhild, væna moy.
 – *Mens de andre sove,*
 de legte alt om en aften.

[Tíðrik himself rode over the land,
 – *will you promise me roses*–
 betrothed his Gunnhild, beautiful maid.
 – *While the others slept,*
 they played all through the night.

Hann festi hana og førði hana heim,
 kongur og vár erkbiskup riðu við
 teim. (CCF 166 A 1,2)

He married her and conducted her home,
 the king and our archbishop rode with
 them.]

The refrain is elegant but it is also in the Danish language. This is not the case in the B version which has a totally different burden and no Danish text. The next 5 verses in the A version have the husband Tíðrik (the German Theoderik) leave home and entrust his people, treasury and wife to Roysningur.³ Tíðrik also gives exact directions (in three verses in Danish) as to what the specific duties are. Roysningur then (in the remaining single Danish-language verse) makes his approach to Gunnhild and is repulsed. He warns the queen about his intention to lie to her husband about her faithfulness.

The Scottish ballad makes a more direct start to the tale:

The birds sang sweet as ony bell,
 The world had not their make;
 The queen she's gone to her chamber,
 With Rodingham to talk. (Child 59 B 1.)

Here we have a different kind of queen, a nameless lady willing to engage Rodingham in what might be no more than a variation on the romance notion of exaggerated, meaningless 'love talk'. This would indeed be in keeping with the chivalrous feeling of the Scottish text. Rodingham, however, continues his advances in phrases well adapted to courtly poetic behaviour but seemingly meant seriously. The queen reminds him of the likely fate they both would face if apprehended. Rodingham is repulsed and is angry. He also appears to be impulsive, for when he meets a man afflicted with leprosy, he makes that leper drunk, and lays him in the queen's own bed. The king is then summoned to see the proof of the queen's behaviour. Rodingham has become the villain, the false accuser of the queen. The king then goes to the queen:

In anger he went to the queen,
 Who fell upon her knee;
 He said, You false, unchaste woman,
 What's this you've done to me?

The queen then turned herself about,
 The tear blinded her ee:
 'There's not a knight in a' your court
 Dare give that name to me'

He said, 'T is true that I do say;
 For I a proof did make;
 You shall be taken from my bower,
 And burned at a stake.

'Perhaps I'll take my word again,
 And may repent the same,
 If that you'll get a Christian man
 To fight that Rodingham.' (Child 59 B, 16-19)

In the Faroese text, Roysningur is not impulsive but lies in wait for his lord to return. At that point he goes to the landing place and immediately accuses Gunnhild of adultery with the archbishop:

"Eg tað við mínum eygum sá,
 at erkibispur hjá henni lá."
 (CCF 166 A, 17)

[I saw it with my own eyes,
 that she lay with the archbishop.]

Tíðrik is incensed, trades his ship for Roysningur's fast horse and gallops headlong home. On arrival, he beats his wife and her only assistance comes from Tíðrik's two children who plead for her and suggest that she be placed in chains.

Significant differences are evident. The Faroese Gunnhild appears to be completely innocent where the Scottish queen leaves an impression of coyness and perhaps of an ultimate willingness to oblige her would-be seducer. The villains are also in stark contrast; the Faroese plotting his use of words where the Scot acts almost without thought. The use of the leper motif is without parallel in the Faroese text and indeed fails to show up in any of the other Scandinavian versions. The husbands are also of different character; the Scottish king immediately pronounces the apparently appropriate sentence but showing his willingness to retract this and offering a trial by combat. There is no mention of burning in the Faroese version A although it is mentioned in passing in version B.

The Faroese Gunnhild, however, has to plead for a trial by combat and has to go herself to find a champion. She finds Mimmering Tand (Mimmaring Tann in

version B). The descriptions of Mimmering vary in a most interesting manner in the two Faroese versions; in version A he is described as the "only [eneste] Christian man" in three verses in the Danish language. Version B (which is totally in Faroese rather than macaronic) describes Mimmaring as the "smallest [minsti] Christian man" and this latter description fits the character as he appears in English, Danish, Norwegian and Swedish texts. The dwarf, however, plays no role in the Faroese story and, after having been described, he is no more mentioned. This would indicate influence from an incoming tale which was never fully incorporated into the Faroese corpus (Christophersen, 1952: 64). The Faroese Gunnhild must wander in chains, but they soon fall off thus proclaiming her innocence. There is no mention of any reconciliation between the husband and wife and the ballad ends with a gift-giving sequence where Roysningur receives a red ring which many have equated with hanging. This gift sequence is a possibly misplaced from the festive scene at the start of the ballad.

The Scottish queen, under sentence of death, sends messengers in all compass directions – a feature unique to British versions. Only in Scotland, however, is the champion who arrives at the very last moment, a full-sized, normal knight. The combat is thus a regular, chivalric battle with no aspects of the supernatural. The villain is defeated, the queen exonerated and reconciled with the king. The knight, Sir Hugh le Blond, is also well rewarded for his action. Christophersen sums up the Scottish version by saying that in it alone "the romantic, chivalric element has become predominant." (Christophersen, 1952:157)

Christophersen provides a useful summing up of the situation.

With the exception of names, the modern British versions show no resemblance to the Scandinavian ballad; but what is more remarkable, they show no mutual resemblance. I cannot find a single line or phrase which the two British versions may be said to have in common. (Christophersen, 1952:109)

And, it would appear that the British texts have equally little in common with the Faroese ballad of "Roysningur".

Clerk Saunders (Child 69)

Child 69, "Clark Saunders", is paired by Nolsøe with CCF 124, "Faðir og dottir". On actual reading, most versions of these two ballads would appear to have relatively little in common. There is, indeed, a similar over-arching motif, "girl's secret lover killed by

family member". There are also some entertaining verses where the girl seeks to avoid telling the truth but the position and function of these sections in the majority of verses of each ballad is totally different. Child gives the texts of seven Scottish versions⁴ all of which, with the exception of 69F, tell virtually the same tale. The quotations here are from 69B and 69F as indicated in each case, and from CCF 124A. In "Clark Saunders", May Margaret is afraid that her seven brothers might find her in bed with her lover. Saunders, however, suggests ways in which she can, in the future, deny complicity in the matter. Thus Saunders instructs her:

Ye'l take the sourde fray my scabbord,
And lowly, lowly lift the gin,
And you may say, your oath to save,
You never let Clark Sanders in. (4)

Yele take a napken in your hand,
And ye'l ty up baith your een,
An you may say, your oath to save,
That ye saw na Sandy sen late yestreen. (5)

Yele take me in your armes twa,
Yele carrey me ben into your bed,
And ye may say, your oath to save,
In your bower-floor I never tread. (6)

When both are asleep, they are discovered. Six of the brothers are loath to take any action but the seventh insists on killing Saunders silently, while he sleeps. In his death throw, he starts and May Margaret, unaware of what has happened, cuddles closer. The next day when she wakes, she slowly becomes aware that she lies in bed with a dead man. She then swears seven years of penance: she will wear no shoes, will not comb her hair and will wear nothing but black. Sanders is buried and May Margaret refuses the comfort her father offers.

Child 69F differs significantly from the other versions in that it lacks the verses of deception listed above. The short headnote gives us the information that the text is actually a composite of three fragments and gives the source as Jamieson, 1806, 1:83. Jamieson himself notes:

The stanzas, where the *Seven Brothers* are introduced, have been enlarged from two fragments, which, although very defective in themselves, furnished lines which, when incorporated with the text seemed to improve it. (Jamieson, 1806, 1:82)

These lines are 69F, verses 14-16.

"O tell us, tell us, May Margaget,
And dinna to us len,
O wha is that, May Margaret,
You and the wa' between?"

"O, it is my bower-maiden," she says,
"As sick as sick can be;
O, it is my bower-maiden," she says,
"And she's thrice as sick as me."

"We hae been east, and we've been west,
And low beneath the moon;
But a' the bower-women e'er we saw,
Hadna goud buckles in their shoon."

These lines may well be likened to Child 274, "Our Goodman" (see below), and also to CCF 124.

The tale told in "Faðir og dottir" is quite different and includes no comforting father figure. We are told at the start of "Clark Sanders" that there is a problem with the lady's brothers. The murder occurs at mid point in the ballad after which it slowly winds down to its end. In the Faroese text, however, the beginning is relatively mild before it rises in chilling intensity to its violent end. The reader, or listener, is probably three fifths of the way through the ballad before there is a realisation that this is not a simple question and answer word game. There are four versions of CCF 124 ranging in length from 28 to 42 verses. All tell exactly the same story although 124C is the only one to include details of the un-named knight's murder.

The entire ballad, with the exception of the last four verses, consists of an interview between an un-named father and daughter. The aim of the question and answer, as becomes apparent about half way through, is to have the daughter admit to having a lover. The questioning starts out with the father asking if she will marry 'this year', whereupon the daughter swears to God and man that she had never even thought of it, she had no secret man and was as pure as a nun. Then a series of questions and ingenious answers begin. No, it was not a knight at her door in the night, it was merely a servant with a deer:

Plagdu so v́́́́́r h́́́́́nder smá,
hava boksl í mund og saðil á? (7)
[Do our small deer usually have a bit in their mouth and a saddle on?]

And so it progresses: there is no knight by her bed, but only Kristin her maid – tearing her clothes off?– when they are wet through, women do that etc. After further rallying, there are questions about the maid – does she usually have her hair cut off in a bowl-cut ? – but women put their plaited hair up in a ring. In 124A at verse 18, the questioning takes a more serious turn. The father asks about the baby crying and is told that it is a dog; a cradle is described as a small silk loom etc. It is obvious that the daughter is increasingly being driven into a corner. It is at this point that 124C has an interpolation of five or six verses describing the father's murder of the knight lover.

This section is missing in 124A and this allow the full horror to work up more slowly. The father asks:

Kennir tú nakað henda fót,
ið hongur við mín saðilrót? (24)
[Do you recognize this foot which hangs on my saddle horn?]

to which the daughter replies in a complete *volte-face*:

Eg kenni hann enn, sum eg kendi hann tá,
so mangt eitt spor til búðar lá. (25)
[I know it now, as I knew it then, there are so many traces of it in my room.]

The father then produces the lover's head and hand which are similarly attached to the saddle and are similarly acknowledged. This is followed by three verses of the father's comment on the seemingly endless question and answer game. Verse 32 is typical:

fyri trýtur bylgja í skógv,
enn kvinnur hava ikke andsvar nógv.
[the waves in the sea would cease sooner than a woman run out of replies.]

The daughter then determines to be avenged by burning her father alive and she does this in the last two verses. This is a powerful, chilling ballad; not least because the initial questioning is so reminiscent of the jocular ballad, "Our Goodman" (Child 274) concerned with questions such as:

How came this horse here,
Without the leave o me? (2)

and the comment on the wife's answer that it is a sow:

But a saddle on a sow's back
I never saw nane. (4)

or even:

"How came this man here
Without the leave of me?" (22)

and the answer:

"Poor blind body,
And blinder mat ye be!
It's a new milking-maid,
My mither sent to me . (23)

"A maid?" quo he.
"Ay, a maid," quo she.

"Fair hae I ridden,
And farer hae I gane,
But lang-bearded maidens
I saw never-nane." (24)

all of which has an echo in CCF 124:

"Hvat var tað for riddari fín,
í aftan stóð for songum tín?" (11)

["Who was that fine knight
who stood by your bed in the
evening?"]

"Tað var eingin riddari fín,
tað var hon Kristin, terna mín. (12)

["That was no fine knight,
that was Kristin, my maid."]

"Plagdi so Kristin, terna tín,
skera av hári um íkring?" (16)

[Does Kristin, your maid usually
have her hair
cut short and bobbed?"]

"Tað var ikki skorið í kring,
menn frúnnar flættur lógu í ring. (17)

["That was not bobbed,
women have plaits in a ring."]

There may well be a case to make that Child 274 is more similar in many ways to CCF 124 than is Child 69, but the fact remains that the Child 274 ballad does not contain a murder.

There are other Scottish ballads that concern the murder by a father of his daughter's lover. An example of this is Child 70, "Willie and Lady Maisry", where Willie has a rendezvous with the king's daughter. He kills all the members of the king's bodyguard but falls at the hand of the king when he is discovered. Child 214, "The Braes o Yarrow" (versions J and K) also involve the death of an "unacceptable" suitor at the hand of the lady's father. In both Child 70 and Child 214 (as in "Clerk Sanders"), the murdered man has managed to eliminate a considerable number of opponents

before his death whereas there is no mention of the Faroese man meeting any other than the father. These additional Scottish ballads, however, do not contain this very significant question and answer format that ties Child 69 and CCF 124 in parallel.

Lord Thomas and Fair Annet (Child 73)

Child 73, "Lord Thomas and Fair Annet", is another judged by Nolsøe to have a Faroese partner. In this case it is CCF 159, "Harra Pætur og Kirstin". The common thread in these two ballads is that only disaster can follow when a man abandons one woman, who is his wife in all but name, in order to marry another, wealthier woman. The Child type-name comes from the A version which was submitted from Scotland to appear in Percy's *Reliques* but the name "Willie and Fair Annie" appears often in Scotland. These ballads are treated in greater detail in Chapter 10.

Fause Foodrage (Child 89)

Child 89, "Fause Foodrage", is paired by Nolsøe with CCF 173 "Sveinur í Vallalíð". Both of these ballads concern revenge by a son for the death of his father. E96 in TSB summarises the type as "Man is killed by unsuccessful rival and revenged by his son." This is yet another of the revenge stories so well documented in the Faroes. "Fause Foodrage", however, has two rather different versions. Text A does not strictly concern a rival although rivals to the suit of King Honour by King Easter and King Wester are mentioned in the first verse. There is no further mention of these figures and the assassin is chosen by and from a group of nobles rising in rebellion. The king is killed, and the life of the pregnant queen is spared even while she is kept under strict house arrest. It is made very clear to her that if she bears a son he will immediately be put to death. If, however, she bears a daughter, that child will be permitted to survive. Text B, however, does indeed involve rivals and here the Eastmure king murders king Onorie on his wedding night and abducts the bride. The queen is held captive and given exactly the same warning as in text A.

The Faroese "Sveinur í Vallalíð" [Svein from the slopes of Valla] is much longer than the Scottish texts which have 35 and 18 verses (plus a fragment of 4 verses). The five Faroese versions vary in length from 80 to 186 verses – though a number of these consist of the repetitions where similar scenes or acts bring forward sets of parallel words. An example of this is in the verses repeated verbatim to describe the weddings of both mother and son. The greater length of the Faroese texts also allows more scope for descriptions lacking in the Scottish version. Thus there are a

number of verses describing how the lady Adalús turns down the hand of Svein and accepts that of Viljorm. We are also given details of the lady herself: we are told that Adalús (named Elin in the first 8, and last verse of 173A, but Adalús in other verses and versions) can read print and runes, spin gold and do other things [mangt kann hon at inna]. She is pictured at her embroidery when suitors arrive but then it is said:

Henni kvittu mangir at biðja,
kongar og so jallar,
hon var so biðlavond,
hon segði teir burtur allar. (3)

Many set out to woo her,
kings and earls,
but she rejected suitors,
turned them all away.

Henni kvittu mangir at biðja,
kongar og so jallar,
hon var so biðlavond,
hon bað teir sita heima. (4)

Many set out to woo her,
kings and earls,
but she rejected suitors,
she told them to stay at home.

This is in startling contrast to the fact that we do not even know the name of the queen in "Fause Foodrage" and only learn of her innate intelligence in the course of the story telling. Adalús refuses Svein but later accepts Viljorm. Svein hears of the marriage and jealousy drives him to come and decapitate his successful, unarmed rival. Adalús was devastated but she was also pregnant. She finally gave birth to a son, named him after his father, kept him quietly and secretly at home and watched him grow fast and strong:

Hann vóks upp hjá sín móður,
honum gav hon hól,
hann vóks meir í einum mánað,
enn onnur börn í tvólv. (32)

He grew up at his mother's home,
she gave him shelter,
he grew more in one month,
than others in twelve.

His strength causes him problems and one day, after a squabble with his playmates, he is told:

"Líkari var tær fáðir at hevna,
enn berja os so sára." (35)

[You would be better to avenge your father than to beat us so sorely.]

He questions his mother, is told the story of his father's murder and shown the bloody shirt which was his father's only "armour". His mother also complains that:

"harfyri hevur hann harra Svein,
leingi farið í frið." (40)

[Nevertheless, Sir Svein has been left in peace for a long time.]

Revenge is scheduled to be gained at a 'Ting' meeting where Svein will be present.

The story in the Scottish text follows a completely different pattern. In text A, the queen, under house arrest, brings about the drunken collapse of her guards and, with divine assistance, squeezes through a narrow window and escapes. She then gives birth to a son as she shelters in a pigstye. Wise William is chosen by the nobles to pursue and find the queen but he sends his wife in his place. The wife and the queen arrange to exchange babies – the royal son for William's daughter. The education for both is outlined:

And ye maun learn my gay goss-hawk,
Right weel to breast a steed,
And I sall learn your turtle dow,
As well to write and read. (22)

and a system of communication arranged:

At kirk and market when we meet,
We'll dare make nae avowe,
But – "Dame, how goes my gay goss-hawk?"
"Madame, how goes my dow?" (24)

Text B has a somewhat simpler plot. There is no escape and no episode in the pigstye. The queen gives birth where she is kept and just manages to exchange her son for the daughter of a poor woman in the town. This is quite a different scenario from the sheltered home upbringing in the Faroese text. The disclosure of the true state of affairs in the Scottish text A is made by Wise William, the fosterfather, when he judged the boy ready. The boy is told he is the rightful owner of the castle, that his father was murdered and that his mother is still held prisoner. The end is swiftly accomplished. After William has finished his story, the boy climbs over the wall, stabs Fause Foodrage to death, frees his mother and then marries the exchanged 'turtle dow'. Text B gives no indication of how the boy learned of his true parentage. It simply states that, at the age of sixteen, he climbs over the castle wall and stabs the king of Eastmure to death.

The Faroese story is more complicated. Young Viljorm rides to challenge Svein but is dismissed by him with contempt. Viljorm crosses himself, calls on divine assistance and then kills Svein and the nephew who accompanied him. Viljorm returns home to tell his mother what has been done. Viljorm then leaves for Vallalið on a horse which is also richly described:

Hann var stroyddur við skarlak,
niður á miðal síðu,
forgyltur var saðilin,
ið Viljormur skuldi á ríða. (59)

He was decked to half his height
in scarlet,
gilded was the saddle that
Viljorm was to ride.

There is no parallel description of such finery on man or animal in the Scottish text. At the home of Svein, Viljorm meets the lady Hermintrú who was Svein's young wife. Viljorm tells her that he has killed Svein and then finds that Hermintrú is very accommodating. Viljorm is then obliged to fight the king who is Hermintrú's father and who is given a variety of different names and nationalities in different versions. This king's life is spared and Viljorm marries Hermintrú.

These ballads both concern revenge for the murder of a father but the Faroese tale is a more straightforward story of sexual jealousy and action while the Scottish story is based more on political instability (A) and jealousy (B) and involves assistants (Wise William and his family or the poor woman of the town) and intrigue. In this and other aspects, the Faroese ballad is much closer to the Danish ballad "Svend af Vollerslev" (DgF 298) than it is to the Scottish "Fause Foodrage". The theme of revenge for the murder is a common one in Faroese balladry. In TSB, where numbers E38 to E53 are concerned with revenge for the death of a father, only 5 of the 16 ballads are not represented in the Faroes while the remaining 11 are found nowhere else. In Scotland, this motif is also found, for example, in Child 203, "The Baron of Brackley" where it is related to the adultery and betrayal by the mother. Child 90, "Jellon Grame", on the other hand mentions a baby son who will grow up to avenge his mother's murder.

The Maid freed from the Gallows (Child 95)

Child 95, "Maid freed from the Gallows", is regarded as a companion to CCF 129, "Frísa vísa". The English language version is, on its own, an international ballad with many varying versions found in the USA as well as in Australia and Jamaica (Long, 1970:18). Child and Long note an incredible number of similar texts to be found throughout Europe from Scandinavia to Sicily and from Spain to Russia and the southern Slavic lands and Long traces the motif back at least to Classical Greek writers. What is truly amazing is the degree of uniformity across this vast area. The type of captivity might vary slightly (e.g. a Russian ballad concerns a son in prison for unmentioned cause, a Wendish prisoner is accused of pretensions above his social

station etc.) as also the items required to gain freedom. The general impression, however, is of a ballad cycle of immense stability – perhaps because of simple structure and insistent repetition.

Child notes 8 versions and fragments of which one version, two sections and one fragment are from Scotland. In addition, the Greig-Duncan collection (GD no. 248) has an example of 6 lines with an accompanying tune:

O hangman hangman, stop the rope,
I think I see my lover
O have ye found my golden ball,
Or have ye paid my fee O?
Or are ye come to see me hang'd
Upon the gallows tree O.⁵

Text 95B, "The Broom of the Cathery Knowes" is the best known and most complete of the Child Scottish texts although it would appear to lack a final verse. As in the Scottish text, the Faroese victim is female. In contrast to this, the American versions often have a male central character. The story in both instances fits the TSB D391 description: "Lover ransoms betrothed after family refuses to". The context, however, is different. In the Scottish versions, the daughter is to be hanged although the crime is not made explicit – although, in fragments F and G, the loss of a 'golden key' is mentioned while the Greig-Duncan version shown above mentions a golden ball (also found in Child 95H from the north of England). In the Faroese, the lady is in a boat and in danger of being shipped off to Friseland. It is not clear whether she is being kidnapped or has been sold into slavery by her family – since such versions do exist in Sweden and Denmark (Long, 1970:108).⁶ Long, however, distinguishes between the two traditions by calling it a "prison-ransom" in Britain and a "pirate-ransom" in Scandinavia while granting that these are only "oicotypical cultural preferences" and other countries have different settings (Long, 1970:132). In both cases the list of relatives follows the same order: father, mother, brother, sister and finally, lover. The ransoms sought appear to follow regional oicotypes: the Scottish texts look, in each case, for "gold and fee". Long has analysed 27 variants in DgF and found that the father was most often asked "for land (fields or forests), the mother and sister for wearing apparel or jewelry, and the lover for rings, crowns and ships". The answer in the Faroese, "I have but two, ..." is uniformly the same in the Scandinavian versions involving such kidnapping (Long, 1970:1108). An example of this is verse 3 where the girl asks her brother to free her by offering his horses. He answers:

Ikki havi eg gangarar meiri enn tvá,
 hvøngan vil eg lata fyri teg gá,
 for vist mást tú á Frísaland fordervast.
 [I have but two horses, and I will give up neither for you, for certain you
 must die in Friseland.]

The pattern in both areas is a "sequence of refusals climaxed by a reversal" (Long, 1970:131).

There are a number of interesting phrases in common. The Scottish text (95B) starts with the request common to so many versions:

It's hold your hand, dear judge," she says,
 "O hold your hand for a while!
 For yonder I see my father a-coming,
 Riding many a mile. (1)

The Faroese, has a similar plea:

Bíðað, bíðað, mín frísa,
 meg man faðir loysa! (1)
 [Wait, wait my Frislander, my father will surely ransom me.]

The requests to family follow:

"Have you any gold father?" she says,
 "Or have you any fee;
 Or did you come to see your own daughter a hanging
 Like a dog, upon a tree?" (2)

han loysir meg við borgum sínum
 han letur meg ei á Frísaland fordervast. (1)
 [He will ransom me with his castles, he won't let me die in Friseland.]

and are denied:

"I have no gold, daughter," he says,
 "I neither have any fee;
 But I am come to see my ain daughter hanged
 And hanged she shall be." (3)

"Eg havi ikki borgar uttan tvá,
 hvørga kann eg lata fyri teg gá
 for vist mást tú á Frísaland fordervast." (1)
 [I have only two castles, neither of which I will give up for you, you will
 surely die in Friseland.]

As the Scottish girl's mother, brother and sister all fail to bring gold and fee and express a desire that the girl be hanged, so does the Faroese mother refuse to sacrifice her two dress tunics, her brother will keep his two horses and her sister will not part with her two houses. When the Scottish lover arrives, the text of 95B ends and it is not clear whether this text ever had the redeeming verse. In view of the fact that all other British texts (that include more than a fragment) have the redeeming verse and that such a verse is found almost universally throughout Europe, it is extremely likely that 95B also ended positively. In the Faroese text, the betrothed offers up his ships saying the girl will never die in Friseland. The Faroese text is elegantly shaped with the last four lines echoing the first four: but where the girl has cried and beaten her hands, saying "let me not die in Friseland", in the end she laughs, claps her hands and says "Now I won't have to die in Friseland".

There are other ballads that have a motif of a condemned woman sending for assistance. Child 65, "Lady Maisry", is an example where the lady is to be burned at the stake because she has refused to give up her English lover, Lord William (by whom she is pregnant). Lord William is sent for to rescue his lady but he arrives too late and Lady Maisry is dead.

The Knight and Shepherd's Daughter (Child 110)

The last pair nominated by Nolsøe was Child 110, "The Knight and Shepherd's Daughter", and CCF 123, "Ebbin kall". TSB 178. "Ebbe Galt" – "Man executed for rape" – is the category that includes this Faroese ballad. Child 110 has the offender given to the victim but this is another case where Crawford provides a Scottish version radically different from the Child texts – see below. In the Faroese "Ebbin kall", however, the guilty man has no choice and is executed. It appears to me that the Scottish Child texts are only a partial analogue to the Faroese: the Scottish versions become a farce whereas the Faroese are in reality a tragedy. In both countries, however, the ballads do begin in a relatively similar manner: a gentleman, who has drunk too much, meets a woman and rapes her.

In the Scottish ballad, the victim is described as a shepherd's daughter while the Faroese victim is the wife of a rich farmer. In both cases the deed is quickly reported to

the king (or, in some Scottish versions, the queen). In Scotland, this is done by the woman herself who has run for some distance after the offending horseman. In "Ebbin kall", however, it is the farmer who arrives to complain that his wife had been abused. As is usual in the longer texts of the Faroese ballads, there is a great wealth of detail almost without parallel in the Scottish texts (where the deed is often accomplished before the end of verse three). An exception to this is Child 110E (from Peter Buchan) where there is a long description of the attempts of the rapist to buy the lady's favour and her refusal to entertain them. In fact, she goes as far as to curse him:

"I wish your bonnie ship rent and rive,
And drown you in the sea;
For all that would not mend the miss,
That you would do to me." (6)

In "Ebbin kall", we have a description of the man's afternoon ride; his attempt to buy the woman's favour; her attempts to buy her own safety and to warn him it would cost his life; and his slashing of her clothing with a knife. In both cases, however, the woman asks the name of her attacker and receives a quasi-jocular reply. In the Scottish (110B) version this is:

"Sometimes they call me Jack," he said,
"Sometimes they call me John.
But when I am in the king's court,
My name is 'Wilful Wil'" (4)

In Faroese, we learn, after his comments about his striped cape, that:

"sveinar kalla meg Ebbin kall
so gangur mítt navn til hóva." (12)
[Men call me Ebbin kall, that is my name at court.]

The reaction of the two kings to the tale of the outrage also bears some similarity but perhaps this is only at the level of ballad commonplace. Where the Faroese offers no alternative, the Scottish king declares that the offender will be hanged if he is a married man but will be given in marriage to the victim if he turns out to be a bachelor. The identification of the assailant as the queen's brother provides the king with some amusement (and the queen with displeasure). The offending William chooses marriage rather than death but attempts first to buy his freedom with gold. The lady refuses the bribe and meets his complaint about her socially inferior position with the comment that he should not have molested her whatever her station in life. The end

of the ballad reveals in different versions that she is of equal or even higher birth than he.

The Crawford version, "Lady Margaret and Sweit Willie" (Lyle, 1996, 2:no.103), is quite different. After the rape, Willie offers marriage and all his worldly goods. Lady Margaret refuses each and every offer and returns it with a curse. There is no report of the incident to any authority and it is noted that the lady's curses are all fulfilled down to the drowning of Sweit Willie. There is no happy ending here. In fact, the contrast between this Scottish version and Child 110E is almost as great as that found between the general run of Scottish versions and those of the Faroe Islands.

Where the Child ballad becomes a farce, the Faroese continues as a tragedy. The king allows that if the as-yet un-named perpetrator is a gentleman of the court, he will forfeit his life. There is no alternative choice available for, as the verse says, the king was "quick to speak" – presumably without forethought::

<p>Tað var hin ungi kongurin, hann var so títtur til máls: "Hevur tað riddar ella sveinur gjørt, tað kosti hans egin háls." (18)</p>	<p>Then the young king, he was so quick to speak: "If any knight or servant did this, it will cost him his neck."</p>
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When the name is revealed (the Danish version states that this is the king's nephew), the king is horrified that he has spoken so quickly.

<p>Tað var hin danski kongurin, hann sló sín hond í hans borð: "Eg vildi til givið hálvt mítt ríki, eg hevði ikki talað tað orð." (21)</p>	<p>Then it was that the Danish king, banged his hand on his table: "I would give half my kingdom, not to have spoken those words."</p>
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Even rash promises must be kept. Ebbin kall's family and fiancée offer up their wealth but fail to secure a reprieve. Ebbin, as he is led to the block, requests the farmer:

"min kæri bóndi, hógg so hart,
tú blóðga ikki mínar lokkar." (31)
[My dear farmer, strike so hard that you don't get blood on my hair.]

and the farmer complies.

OTHER COMPARISONS

Besides the twelve ballad pairs above which were treated by Nolsøe in his article, there are four others arrived at by working through the tables of analogues and parallels presented in DgF, TSB and Syndergaard (1995) to find what might be worth consideration. These tables generally use DgF as the basis because of its inclusiveness in the general Scandinavian ballad area. The results of this conflation were presented in Table 6.1. The multi-episodic nature of Faroese ballads, however, sometimes produces comparative examples which, on closer examination, are not acceptable analogues. Thus $A=A+B=B$ where A and B bear almost no resemblance to each other. An example of this can be seen at the end of Table 6.1 where Child 270 "The Earl of Mar's Daughter" is given two analogues in the Faroese column. As noted in the following section, however, there is little resemblance between the Scottish and Faroese ballads although both have similarities to their Danish counterpart.

Hind Etin (Child 41)

Child 41, "Hind Etin" and CCF 169, "Signild og dvørgurin" can be considered as analogues as was suggested by Child's headnotes to number 41. Perhaps Nolsøe omitted this because of the fact that there are, throughout Britain and Scandinavia, several different version types. Child 41 and CCF 169 happen to belong to two different types although I would suggest that they are just as similar as "Clerk Colvill" and "Ólavur Riddararós" and indeed, like those ballads, share the fact of starting at different points in the story.

Child observes that there are three version types, of which the three Scottish versions belong to type number one where much is made of the lady's entrapment (although it is in part voluntary in version C), of her bearing seven children, and of her regret at her inability to attend religious service. In version A, she is able to return to her family, all are reconciled and suitably churched. Version B has no resolution as it ends with her weeping in the cave. Version C sees only a churching of mother and children and no mention of any family reconciliation.

Type two (which includes both Faroese versions), starts at a later point in the story. There is no initial information on the entrapment and the captor, instead of being a giant, is a dwarf. The lady continues to live at her family home. Her children, however, live in the dwarf's hill with their father and are never seen by their mother after she has given them birth. She betrays her connection to the dwarf, he appears and

takes her to the hill, and there she dies or is given a drink which induces forgetfulness.

Type three is one in which the woman lives in the hill. In these versions, the woman is much concerned with aspects of church attendance and when she is finally permitted to attend, she violates the injunctions laid down by the dwarf. She is then compelled to return to the hill even though she is not, in many cases, willing to do so. This form almost always ends with the lady's death.

The Scottish and Faroese versions offer a considerable contrast. Although both concern an abduction, the Scottish one is by an Etn (or some variation – Akin or Hastings) which means 'giant', while the Faroese captor is a dwarf. Scottish versions A and B start with an abduction sequence that is reminiscent in the first case of "Hind Horn" and in the second case of "Tam Lin". Version C has the lady mount a horse behind her own choice of lover while he conjures up a mist to confuse pursuers. The lady in the C version may deeply regret her choice but she does not appear to have been subject to the cruelty exhibited by the Etn in version B.

In terms of abductions, however, the Scottish version A says:

Lady Margaret sits in her bower door
Sewing at her silken seam,
She heard a note in Elmond's wood,
And wishd she there had been. (1)

The Faroese lady A is also at home but has a different problem:

Signild sló sín vevin fast
hvíta mjólk av bróstum sprakk. (1)
[Signild pulled her weaving close, white milk sprang from her breast.]

"Men hoyr tú, Signild, dóttir mín,
hví springur mjólk av bróstum tín?" (2)
[Listen, daughter, Signild, why is milk springing from your breast?"]

"Tað er ei mjólk, tað sýnist so,
tað er tann mjøður, eg drakk í gjár." (3)
[That is not milk, it only seems so, that is the mead I drank yesterday.]

"Tvey er ei tingini, bæði eru ólík,
brúnur er mjøður, men mjólk er hvít." (4)
[These are two quite different things, mead is brown but milk is white.]

The giant asks no leave in Scottish A:

He's built a bower, made it secure
Wi carbuncle and stane;
Tho travellers were never sae nigh,
Appearance it had nane. (7)

but in the Faroese, there is a similar attempt at concealment by keeping the lady at her home even over the extended period of fifteen years. The existence of children is disclosed impersonally in Scottish A :

He's kept her there in Elmond's wood,
For six lang years and one,
Til six pretty sons to him she bear,
And the seventh she's brought home. (9)

while in the Faroese, they are mentioned by the lady to her mother:

Fimtan havi eg børnini borið,
eingi havi eg klæðini skorið. (7)
[I have had fifteen children, but I never got to dress any of them.]

Fimtan havi eg børnini átt,
eingi havi eg við eygum sætt. (8)
[I have had fifteen children, but I never saw any of them.]

At this point the Scottish ballad (versions A, B) has a section where the father tells the children why their mother weeps. B progresses beyond this only as far as to have the mother confirm the father's explanation. Version C has only the lament of the mother. A and C are resolved as mentioned above. In the Faroese ballad, however, the tragedy implicit in fifteen unseen children is made manifest. The dwarf appears and leads Signild off to the hill where he is responsible for her death although he bitterly regrets that fact.

Fair Janet (Child 64)

"Fair Janet" is an interesting ballad and its similarity to the Faroese "Kong Valdeman og Sofía" (CCF 177) is obvious although Child in his headnotes observed that the points of resemblance "demand notice, though they may not warrant the assumption of community of origin". The single Faroese text is a version of a ballad that exists in all the Scandinavian areas and is described in TSB D346 as "Queen forces king to punish

sister for her unchastity". The story outline of the ballad in Scotland and in the Faroes is approximately the same: a lady must rise from childbirth when she is summoned to appear and then is obliged by the circumstances to dance herself to death. The differences lie in the details. The Scottish pregnancy is the result of a love affair between Janet (Annet or Maisry) and Sweet Willie. Little Kirstin's Faroese pregnancy is the result of a magic spell cooked up (quite literally, with pieces of fish) by her evil sister-in-law, Queen Sofia.

The order to appear in the seven Scottish Child texts and in Crawford's "Sweet Willie" (Lyle, 1996, 2:no.92) is issued by Janet's father who may, or may not, know that Janet has just given birth. His intent is to wed her to an aged French lord (or to a younger English one) and his command is that she appear at the church in her bridal clothes. Sweet Willie, who has secretly taken his new-born son to his mother's home, is chosen to lead her horse (or, in some texts, to ride before her). At the reception, Janet declines to dance with her groom and Willie intends to dance with the bride's maids. Janet laments that at another time he would have danced with her (version 64A):

I've seen ither days wi' you, Willie,
And so has mony mae,
Ye would hae danced wi' me mysel,
Let a' my maidens gae. (26)

She then dances with Willie, takes three turns in the dance and drops dead at his feet. Willie then dies in sympathy. The Crawford text, on the other hand, has the bride giving Sweet Willie her keys and money to pay for a child's nurse. She bids Willie farewell but her death is not made clear.

The Faroese situation is different. Kirstin's brother is informed by his wife that, while he was away, his sister Kirstin was seduced by an English prince. Kirstin is then summoned to court. When the messengers come from the king, Kirstin knows there is trouble in store:

Hevur mín bróðir sent boð eftir mær,
tað völdi tann ónda Sofía av sær. (14)
[If my brother has sent for me, that evil Sofia made him do it.]

She then disperses what wealth she has to her midwives and extra to the maid she asks to take care of her daughter. She rides to court leaving a trail of blood and, on entering, crosses herself and commits herself to the kingdom of Christ. There are several exchanges where Kirstin and (sometimes) the king fend off the requests of the queen.

Eventually, however, Kirstin is compelled to dance and sing until she finally collapses. This occasions one of the great understatements in a ballad text:

Svaraði sveinur for borði stóð:
 "Kvinnu hvíla er sjáldan góð." (39)
 [A man standing in front of the table reacted, "Rest for a woman is seldom good."]

This proves, however, to be an accurate assessment when Kirstin's corpse is carried away in the following verse.

Thomas o Yonderdale (Child 253)

I feel that the possible partnership of Child 253, "Thomas o Yonderdale", and CCF 119, "Brunsveins vísa" should indeed be considered. The story of the Faroese text looks very much like a pale, positive version of "Harra Pætur og Kirstin", and, indeed, there are a number of lines that look exactly the same. It is possible that this ballad should instead be linked with "Lord Thomas and Fair Annet". On the other hand, "Thomas o Yonderdale" is very similar to "Lord Thomas and Fair Annet". In this case, however, Thomas leaves Maisry and their son while he sails off to sea. He becomes engaged to another woman but, before the marriage, he has a dream about the two he left behind. He then summons them to come and marries Maisry rather than the bride to whom he was contracted. This is the opposite of what happens in "Lord Thomas and Fair Annet". In the Faroese text, the bride learns that Mjólkhvít [Milk-white] is the mistress rather than the sister of her bridegroom. The bride then laments that this is the third time such a thing has happened to her and advises Brúnsvein to marry his mistress and let her (the supposed bride) go home again. The ballads are really very similar for, in each case, the long term mistress wins out over a new bride-to-be, and in neither case is the ballad an interesting piece of work.

The Earl of Mar's Daughter (Child 270)

Another ballad correspondence not mentioned by Nolsøe, but apparent in the analogue tables, given in Table 6.1, is the pairing of Child 270, "The Earl of Mar's Daughter", with CCF 127 "Flúgvandi biðil" [Wild Bird lover] and these should also be considered. They, however, as noted also by Child in his headnotes, really have little in common other than the fact that the lover arrives in the shape of a bird. In the Scottish text, the lover has been bewitched by his mother so that he can be more attractive to

women! He stays with the girl who called him to her and fathers seven sons – all of whom are instantly sent away to their grandmother. When at last (after a preposterous 23 years) the Earl of Mar forces his daughter to marry another man, the bird lover recruits a rescue squad of birds (including his seven sons as swans) who carry off the bride to safety. Family relations are afterwards restored to normal.

The Faroese text concerns a young man who goes to the smithy and has bird wings made of gilded white silver. Then:

Tá ið hann hevdi smíðað teir av,
 tá fleyg hann í tað myrka hav (9)
 [When he had them finished at the smithy, then he flew out over the dark sea.]

He is received joyfully by the maid who would accept only a man who could fly like a bird. The last 15 verses of the 39 in text A are nonsense rhymes concerned with the re-naming of her clothing. A second version omits this ludicrous addition.

This has been a brief overview of those ballads in Scotland and in the Faroe Islands which have been seen as being parallel or companion pieces. The major problem with attempting to construct analogue tables is that the judgement must be a) relative and b) subjective. It is relative in that there are almost no international ballads which tell exactly the same story in exactly the same way. There are parallel tales that address the same theme, may employ a similar selection of motifs and a varying array of details. But the analogue tables would appear to have set some objective boundary in an attempt to answer the question "How close is close?" This, given the multitude of possible details tends towards a subjective judgement. On the other hand, extending the most praise-worthy delineations of the TSB system to cover the international ballad corpus can lead to a schema with the complexity of Stith Thompson's *Motif-Index of Folk Literature*.⁷

Syndergaard has attempted to introduce a system of ranking by noting the 8 ballads which he feels have the "closest equivalencies" between Child and DgF. (Syndergaard, 1995:241)⁸ The 8 so indicated were Child numbers, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 13, 20 and 25. Of these, only Child 10 ("The Two Sisters") is represented in the Faroe Islands. What I have done is to take "The Two Sisters", its Faroese parallel and each of the other pairs suggested by the sources, ascertain that they do address the same theme and look, very briefly, to see what the motifs and details have in common.

The results varied from pairs that I thought relatively close to those whose 'common thread' was perhaps too nebulous to be acceptable. "The Two Sisters" (Child

10) and "Hørpu ríma" (CCF 136) were certainly close. "The Maid freed from the Gallows" (Child 95) and "Frísa vísa" (CCF 129) also appeared so. The theme, in this case, is the attempt to ransom a girl free from a situation that is oicotypically defined (hanging in Scotland, kidnapping in the Faroe Islands). The plea progression through the immediate family is the same although the expected offerings are also oicotypes. Ultimate success is achieved in the person of the lover (although this must be inferred in Scotland).

At the other end of the spectrum are such pairs as "The Earl of Mar's Daughter" (Child 270) and "Flúgandi biðil" (CCF 127); "Sir Patrick Spens" (Child 58) and "Margaretu kvæði" (CCF 77). In the first pair, the common theme is that of a man who flies to his lover. In the Scottish case, the man assumes the body form of a bird and commences a long relationship that produces children who can also assume the form of birds. In the Faroese ballad, however, the hero has a pair of wings made by a smith in order to impress a lady who will only welcome a man able to fly to her on wings. The man is joyfully received – end of story. There is really too little here to determine if we are indeed hearing the same story. The relationship of "Sir Patrick Spens" to "Margaretu kvæði" is noted only by Nolsøe and is difficult to support on the basis of historical connection.

As regards the other 8 ballad pairs covered in this chapter, I believe that they can certainly be considered as analogues or parallels. I did not find, however, that there were any distinctively Faroese motifs or details occurring in the Scottish ballads – or vice versa.

The next chapters (as mentioned above), will consider the remaining four pairs in greater detail.

¹ It is interesting to note, however, that the drowning girl refuses to resign her fiancé in most Norwegian and Icelandic versions.

² This is rather similar, perhaps to the case of the woman who claimed to be the Grand Duchess Anastasia and a survivor of the Romanov massacre.

³ In Faroese, this means "walrus" and Christophersen notes that this is "not a normal personal name" but suggests that it might be a corruption of Rodingar. (Christophersen, 1952:92).

⁴ This ballad apparently did not survive traditionally in Scotland into the twentieth century; an additional nineteenth-century text is Crawford's "The Ensign and the Lady Gay" (Lyle, 1975, 1:109-112). This is similar to most of the Child versions except that the lady envisions a few extra penances for herself.

⁵ Long (1970:31) notes the "conspicuous absence of "The Gallows Tree" from other Scottish collections", including the works published by Keith (1925) and Greig (1914). The new GD work, however, includes the quoted lines which, in turn give support to Montgomerie's contention that it was used as a game song in Forfarshire in the first half of the 20th century. (Montgomerie, 1956:40)

⁶ Although Long has placed her English language versions in type tables, she has not included other European analogues in these tables. These versions are, however, briefly mentioned in the Chapter "The Tradition in Europe" (pp. 108-21).

⁷ This is a subject currently under discussion, see Atkinson, 1999b.

⁸ Syndergaard also labels his table as indicating "cognates" while also pointing out that this "does not imply a genetic relationship in all cases". (Syndergaard, 1995:241) I have not used the term "cognate" because I feel that such implications are unavoidable.

CHAPTER 7

Babylon; or, The Bonnie Banks o Fordie (Child 14A) and *Torkils døtur* (CCF 176A)

The narrative outline for this ballad type is the following. A young girl (or as many as three sisters) is accosted by a robber (or as many as three robbers) in the countryside. She is given the choice of submitting to rape or forfeiting her life, chooses the latter and is killed. The murderer either is executed or commits suicide.

Child notes five Scottish versions of this ballad of which three are attributed to publications by Motherwell, one to Herd and the last to Kinloch.¹ Child's headnotes also give information on analogues of the ballad in all Scandinavian lands while Grundtvig extends the spread of the story type by mentioning similar romances existing in the French, Provençal and Northern Italian languages. CCF lists three versions of *Torkils døtur* in Faroese. Version A is quoted from Lyngby, B was collected by Napoleon Nolsøe and C by Kristian Joensen.

I intend to place the ballads side by side to make clear the similarities and differences in the story line. Then I will look for any similarities in descriptions, commonplaces and other modes of expression. In the case of significant differences, I propose to look for those versions which might be judged closer to our two examples than they are to each other and to note an explanation for this difference.

The Scottish text used here is Child 14A which Child noted as having been printed in Motherwell's *Minstrely* (1827:88). The Faroese text is CCF 176A which was printed in Lyngbye (1822:534-44).

Scottish

There were three ladies lived in a bower,
Eh vow bonnie
 And they went out to pull a flower.
On the bonnie banks of Fordie.

Faroese

Torkil eigur sær døtur tvær,
 – at dansa –
 leingi á morgni sova tær.
 – Væl er mær ansad,
 (har vil eg á gólvid fram at dansa, hóast
 tú vilt mær vívil vanda, væl er mær ansad).
 [Torkil himself had two daughters,
 – let's dance –
 they sleep long in the morning.
 – I will take good care
 (There I will go onto the floor to dance,
 although you want to harm my wife,
 I will take good care).]

- 2 Tær sova sær so leingtil sól skín
á teirra seingir.
[They sleep so long,
the sun shines on their beds.]
- 3 Tær sova sær so leingi á dag,
til sól skín á teirra seingjarstad.
[They sleep so long in the
daytime,
till the sun shines on their
bedsteads.]
- 4 Torkil gongur til búdar,
han vekir upp dötur prúdar.
[Torkil goes to their room,
wakes up [his] magnificent
daughters.]
- 5 "Statt upp, Katrin, dóttir mín,
kirkjumadurin bíðar tín.
["Get up, Katrin my daughter,
your escort to church is waiting."]

Here we see immediate differences. The Scottish text sets forth with three sisters who are bound to pick flowers. This is a formulaic expression described by Toelken as an "inadvertent invitation" if not a "common prelude to attack and seduction" (Toelken 1995: 101-102). The Faroese text concerns two sisters, one of whom is scheduled to leave the house to go to church with an escort – a very different type of excursion. The girl Katrin, however, is not attentive to her obligation and has not got out of bed as soon as she ought.

- 6 Katrin setst á seingir,
hon kleidist væl og leingi.
[Katrin sits on the beds,
dresses well and slowly.]
- 7 Hon fór í ein silkiserk,
níggju moyggja handaverk.
[She puts on a silk shift,
the handwork of nine maids.]
- 8 Uttanyvir møttulin blá,
gull eftir hvørjum seymi lá.
[Over that a blue cloak,
gold lay along every seam.]

- 9 Katrin setst á seingjarstokk,
so fór hon í skarlakssok.
[Katrin sits on the bed edge,
puts on her scarlet stockings.]
- 10 Skarlakssokk og búgvín
skógv,
hvítar hendur víð herdar tvá.
[Scarlet stockings and
decorated shoes,
white hands hung down from
her sleeves.]
- 11 Katrin tekur sín góða
gullkamb,
hon kembir sítt hár, víð silkiband.
[Katrin takes her good gold
comb,
combs her hair with silk
ribbon.]
- 12 Hon kembir sítt hár, víð silki
smá,
gullkrúnuna setir hon omaná.
[She combs her hair with small
ribbon,
sets a gold crown on top.]
- 13 Katrin gongur í rossahús,
grá gangara hon loysir út.
[Katrin goes to the stable,
unties a grey horse.]
- 14 Hon loysir út ein, hon loysir
út tvá,
tann besta legði hon sadilin á.
[She unties one, unties two,
saddles the better one.]
- 15 Har var eingin knektur hjá,
sjálv legði Katrin bokslid á.
[There was no groom there,
she puts on the bridle herself.]
- 16 Har var eingin knektur ílund,
sjálv legði Katrin bokslid í munn.
[There was no groom there
she puts the bit in the mouth
herself.]

- 17 So reid hon á gøtuna fram,
 tad glymdi, sum hennara gangari
 rann.
 [She rides away down the
 path,
 it sounds as if her horse is
 running.]

The Faroese text goes into an extraordinary amount of detail concerning Katrin's preparations and departure. Her clothing is closely described as its identification will play an important role later in the ballad. Her act of combing her hair is also stressed – indeed, in some other Scandinavian versions, she also washes her hair. Such a formula in a Scottish ballad would according to Andersen, involve the "notion of temptation and (subconscious) erotic longing" (Andersen, 1985:109). Here it also implies a degree of arrogance and vanity: she regards her appearance as more important than her duty to be at church. Also emphasised is the fact that she is totally alone. Her escort to church has not waited and there is not even a groom to help her with the horse. The un-named Scottish girls make no special preparations before their departure.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>2 They hadna pu'ed a flower but ane,
 When up started to them a banished
 man.</p> | <p>18 Tá id hon kom har sudur líd,
 møttu henni vallarar 'trujg'.
 [When she comes a little
 further south
 she meets three travellers.]</p> |
| | <p>19 Tá id hon kom har skamt
 ífrá,
 møttu henni vallarar tvá.
 [Then, a short distance
 further
 she meets two travellers.]</p> |
| | <p>20 Tá id hon kom har mitt á
 leid,
 møtti henni vallari ein.
 [Then when she gets midway,
 she meets a single traveller.]</p> |

The meeting with the murderer takes place. The Faroese text must work its way through a triple succession of encounters before the final scene is reached. This intensifies the expectations of action but is also a convenient method of lengthening a ballad to meet dance requirements. Further comments on intensification will be made below. In the Scottish text, the phrase "hadna pu'ed a flower but ane" is seen by Andersen as preceding the "appearance of a young man" as it is a "prelude to sexual

assault" (Andersen 1985: 116-117). This is also an intensification, a repetition of the same suggestive commonplace used in the first verse. The Scottish text also makes it clear that the man is an outlaw. The word "vallari" used in Faroese can mean "pilgrim" but also, more often, means "vagrant".

- 3 He's taen the first sister by her hand,
And he's turned her round and made her
stand.

The murderer accosts the girls. It appears that the Scottish maids are on foot rather than on horseback.

- 4 "It's whether will ye be a rank
robber's wife,
Or will ye die by my wee pen-knife?"

- 21 "Hoyr tú, Katrin, eg tali til
tín.
vilt tú vera mítt kvøldarvív?"
[Listen Katrin, I am talking
to you,
will you be my mistress?]

- 5 "It's I'll not be a rank robber's wife,
But I'll rather die by your wee pen-knife."

- 22 "Fyrr vil eg láta mítt unga
lív,
enn eg vil vera títt kvøldarvív."
["I would sooner give up my
young life,
than become your mistress."]

- 23 "Hvat vilt tú láta títt unga lív,
heldur enn vera mítt kvøldarvív?"
["You would rather die,
than become my mistress?"]

The Scottish sister is offered a choice of submission or death and chooses the latter. The Faroese Katrin is offered no choice but gives a formulaic "death before dishonour" reply. There is indeed a verbal echo in the question asked of each girl and also in the reply (see particularly verse 22 in Faroese and verse 5 in Scottish). This is the motif that survives cross-culturally in almost all versions. Such little variation as there is in Scottish texts is exemplified in the difference between,

- Child 13A 4 "It's whether will ye be a rank robber's wife,
Or will ye die by my wee pen knife?"

- Child 13C 3 "Will ye consent to lose your life,
Or will ye be a banished lord's wife?"

Child 13D 4 "Istow a maid, or istow a wife?
Wiltow twinn with they maidenhead, or thy sweet life?"

with the answers being given appropriate to the question asked. The Nordic ballads appear to have even less variation in the expression of this motif and all are expressed in much the same terms as given above. Let us, however, return to the direct comparison of the Scottish and Faroese texts.

6 He's killed this may, and he's laid her by, For to bear the red rose company.	24 Vallarin sínum svørði brá, hann hjó Katrinu í lutir tvá. [The traveller drew his sword and cut Katrin in two.]
--	--

The Scottish girl is stabbed to death while Katrin is literally chopped in two, presumably by being beheaded. It is possible that the use of the term "red rose" rather than "rosebud" may be an indicator of rape (see Toelken, 1995:34 for some of the metaphorical embodiments of virginity and 1995:42 for an equation of the red rose with despoiled virginity²).

- 7 He's taken the second one by the hand,
And he's turned her round and made her stand.
- 8 "It's whether will ye be a rank robber's wife
Or will ye die by my wee pen-knife?"
- 9 "I'll not be a rank robber's wife,
But I'll rather die by your wee pen-knife."
- 10 He's killed this may, and he's laid her by,
For to bear the red rose company.
- 11 He's taken the youngest ane by the hand,
And he's turned her round and made her stand.
- 12 Say's, "Will ye be a rank robber's wife,
Or will ye die by my wee pen-knife?"

Here we have a repetition of the murder procedure with no change in the vocabulary used. The threefold repetition is, this time, in the Scottish text. Toelken's comments on this structural form, as it applies to Child 14, is that it can "be seen as a way of intensifying a metaphorical or symbolic action by repetition: an essentially incestuous act, entering and violating sisters' bodies with a knife" (Toelken, 1995:102).

- 13 "I'll not be a rank robber's wife,
Nor will I die by your wee pen-knife."

- 14 "For I hae a brother in this wood,
And gin ye kill me, it's he'll kill thee."
- 15 "What's thy brother's name? come tell to me,"
"My brother's name is Baby Lon."
- 16 "O sister, sister, what have I done!
O have I done this ill to thee!"
- 17 O since I've done this evil deed,
Good sall never be seen o me."
- 18 He's taken out his wee pen-knife,
And he's twyned himsel o his ain sweet life.

The youngest sister is not submissive. She informs the murderer that she has a brother in this wood who will avenge her. The attacker's name, "Baby Lon", quickly establishes the fact that the murderer is the brother in question. He has thus just killed two of his sisters. There is no mention, in Scottish texts, of any journey to the family house as the murderer commits suicide on the spot. The Faroese text, however, does not end at this point but proceeds to paint a picture that reminds the reader of some hagiography. From this point of view, the comments of Tracy Sands are appropriate:

One of the most important aspects of the narrative pattern of legendary ballads with female protagonists, in contrast to those with male protagonists, is an emphasis on death. It is not only the frequency with which female protagonists die that is noteworthy in these ballads, but also the way death is regarded ... it is clear that the implications of death are not only negative. Further the protagonists appear to be aware of the rewards – or at least the lack of menace – of death before they die. (Sands, 1995:170)

- 25 Har sum hennara blódid
dreiv,
tendradist ljós á hvørji leid.
[There where her blood
poured,
lights were lit in every
direction.]
- 26 Har sum hennara hōvdid lá,
sprakk ein kelda við heilivág.
[There where her head lay,
sprang up a spring of healing
water.]

- 27 Har sum hennara bulurin lá,
reistist ein kirkja og krossur á.
[There where her torso lay,
a church with a cross on it
was erected.]

The moral and religious aspects of this subgroup are made clear: the appearance of lights and a healing spring are proofs of innocence (and often of martyrdom) and the later construction of a church completes this connection. The murderer then travels on and seeks shelter at the house of his victim's family.

- 28 Vallarin heim í gardin fór,
úti er Torkil, fyri honum stód.
[The traveller went on to
[Katrin's] home.
Torkil meets him outside.]
- 29 "Hoyr tú, vallarin, eg tali til
tín,
sást tú ikki Katrinu, dóttur mín?"
["Listen, traveller, I am
speaking to you,
did you not see Katrin, my
daughter?"]
- 30 "Jú so menn, eg hana sá,
í Mariukirkju var hon í gjá
["Yes indeed, I saw her,
she was in St. Mary's church
yesterday.]
- 31 Torkil, Torkil, læna mær
hús,
eg eri mær so sára sjúk!"
[Torkil, Torkil, give me shelter
I feel so very ill!"]
- 32 "Nógv eru hús til reidar,
um enn vallararnir vóru fleiri.
["There is plenty of room,
even though there are other
travellers.]
- 33 Asa lítla, tendra ljós,
vallarin er til seingjar fúsur!"
[Young Asa, light the lamp
the traveller is eager for
bed!"]

- 34 Asa gongur til seingjar,
reidir undir sjúkum dreingi.
[Asa went to the bed [room]
to prepare it for the sick
young man.]
- 35 "Asa lítla, sov hjá mær,
ein silkiserk gevi eg tær!"
"Young Asa, sleep with me,
I will give you a silk shift!"
- 36 "Lat meg fyrst serkin sjá,
síðan skal eg tær sova hjá."
["Let me see the shift first,
after that I will sleep with
you."]
- 37 Tá id hon tann serkin sá,
systurmerkid kendi hon á.
[When she saw that shift,
she recognised her sister's
mark.]
- 38 "Asa lítla, sov hjá mær,
møttulin blá gevi eg tær."
["Young Asa sleep with me,
I will give you a blue cloak."]
- 39 "Lat meg fyrst møttulin sjá,
síðan skal eg tær sova hjá."
["Let me see the cloak first,
after that I will sleep with
you."]
- 40 Tá id hon tann møttulin sá,
systurmerkid kendi hon á.
[When she saw that cloak,
she recognised her sister's
mark."]
- 41 "Asa lítla, sov hjá mær,
eina gullkrúnu gevi eg tær."
[Young Asa, sleep with me,
I will give you a golden
crown."]

- 42 "Lat meg fyrst gullkrúnuna
sjá,
síðan skal eg tær sova hjá."
["Let me see the gold crown
first,
after that I will sleep with you."]
- 43 Tá id hon gullkrúnuna sá,
systurmerkid kendi hon á.
[When she saw that gold
crown,
she recognised her sister's
mark.]
- 44 Asa kastadi hurd til gátt:
"Vallarin, hav nú ein[a] góða
nátt!"
[Asa threw the door wide
open:
"Traveller, I wish you a
good night!"]

Asa is tempted by the traveller with a three-fold offer of rich gifts intensified once again by repetition. She, however, recognises each of the articles as having belonged to her missing sister and quickly leaves the room. The detail with which Katrin's clothes were described in the first verses make their identification inevitable to performer and audience alike.

- 45 Asa gongur fyri fadir sín:
"Vallarin hevur dripid dóttur tín."
[Asa went to her father,
"The traveller has killed your
daughter."]
- 46 "Hvør torir mær tey bod at
bera,
ella hvør tordi tann gerning at
gera?"
["Who dares to bring me the
message,
and who dared to have done
that deed?"]

- 47 "Eg tori tær tey bod at bera,
vallarin tordi tann gerning at
gera."
["I dare bring you the
message,
the traveller dared the deed."
- 48 Torkil heitir á sveinar tvá:
"Gangid á skógv og kyndid bál!
[Torkil calls to two servants:
"Go to the forest and light a
bonfire!"]
- 49 Gangid á skógv og kyndid
bál,
har skal vallarin brenna á!"
[Go to the forest and light a
bonfire,
the traveller will be burned
to death there.]
- 50 Tad var um ein morgun ny,
– *at dansa* –
vallarin brann í grønari líd.
– *Væl er mær ansad,*
(*har vil eg á gólvid fram at dansa,*
hóast tú vilt mær vívil vanda,
væl er mær ansad).
[It was on a new morning,
– *let's dance* –
the traveller burned on the
green hillside.
– *I will take good care,*
(*there I will go onto the floor to dance,*
although you want to harm my wife
I will take good care).]

The realisation of what has happened to Katrin brings swift vengeance from her father. Assistance is sought from the servants, a bonfire is lit and the murderer burned to death next morning. From these texts it can be seen that the Faroese has no hint of incest nor even any mention of sons in the family. On the other hand, the Scottish ballad has none of the signs of martyrdom or other religious influence.

A further quotation from Toelken concerning the Scottish ballad might shed some light on the subject and lead us on into an examination of some possible reasons for the differences between the texts.

The structural metaphor enacts a scene that equates incest with death, suicide, and unspoken misery for the survivors. Thus the ballad is actually "about" incest as much as it is "about" murder. Just as the German song "Dat du min leevste bist" (chapter 3) dramatizes a sexual encounter in recognizable stages (negotiation-invitation, entrance, ejaculation, and withdrawal) without describing the sex act explicitly, so Babylon dramatizes incest metaphorically in an equally reliable series without naming it: plucking flowers (inadvertent invitation), aggressive encounter featuring a choice between death and sex, male entry into female characters (stabbing), the revelation of relationship after the fact, suicide, survival of one potential victim. The dramatic equation would seem to equate incest with the destruction of family ties, as well as with self-destruction and the survivor traumatized and alone. The irony is powerful because a family presumably protects, nurtures and includes its members, especially those deemed in need of protection. In this family, a male who normally would protect the females, has already been separated and banished. (Toelken, 1995:102)

It is unlikely that Toelken has read Olrik's headnote essay to DgF 338 commenting on the Scandinavian analogues of Child 14. Toelken has, however, touched on the important aspects that Olrik brings to the fore. What this headnote does is to examine, at some length, the fact that this basic story has been dealt with in two differing ways in the Scandinavian areas (DgF, 6:114-125). These he terms the 'legend' or West-Nordic and the 'family tragedy' (often involving three sons) or East-Nordic forms.

The West-Nordic form existed generally throughout the Scandinavian area. In Sweden and Denmark, this form has been overlaid by the East-Nordic which has not reached Iceland, the Faroes or Norway. The one Norwegian exception to this can be shown to have migrated from the south (see Figure 7.1). In areas of southern Sweden, the earliest versions of the ballad follow the West-Nordic form for the first three quarters of the text but end in the East-Nordic form. Then, through time, the balance shifts and motifs associated now with the Western version decline or disappear. In Skaane (southern Sweden) and the neighbouring island of Bornholm, however, the earliest known versions (from 1624) show all the features of the Eastern form and few of those associated with the West. For this reason, Olrik felt that the Skaane area was the 'home' of the Eastern version which then spread to the north and west. He also speculates that the origin of the tale was probably in the Romance language areas of the south and notes that, if this Romance form is indeed the Nordic *urform*, it was no closer to the West Nordic than to the Eastern form. He also suggests that it was the

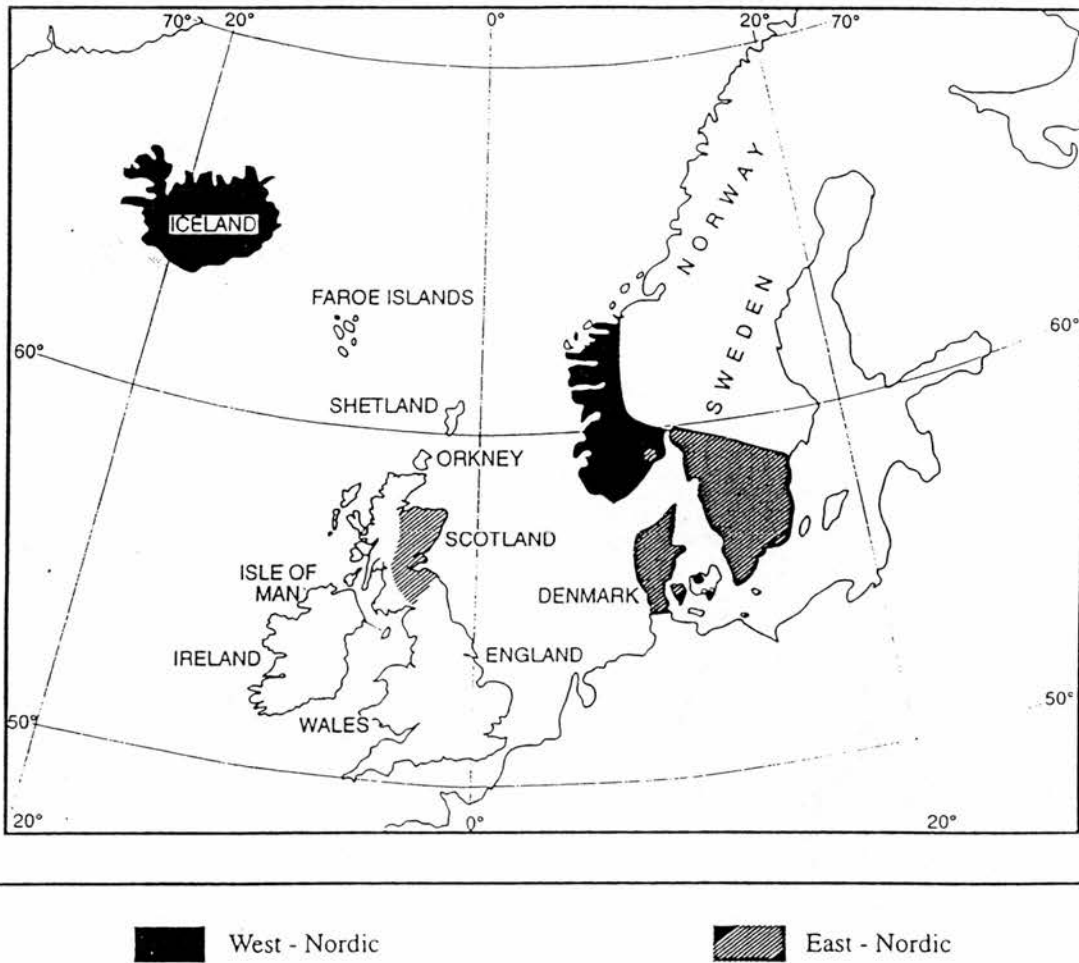


Figure 7.1 Distribution of Types analogous to "Babylon; or, The Bonnie Banks o' Fordie" (Child 14)

amalgamation of the Scottish and the West Nordic forms that produced the 'family tragedy' form of the East. He is, however, less than specific about how this merger might have occurred.

Poems about Truel's sons simply seem to have come into existence with the merging of the ballad "The Three Sisters" (Child 14) with the legend ballad "Hr. Truel's Daughters". It became so extremely easy to combine them because the argument between the robber and the maid occurs in both, [...]. And their fate is understood as slightly different ways of narrating the same event. Among versions that are place specific, we quickly see forms which one barely with certainty dares to class with either one or the other of the two types. The Truel ballad was revised, then, so that the whole beginning, which did not correspond to "The Three Sisters", was reduced to one stanza about the daughters going to church, and the recognition conversation lifted from "The Three Sisters".

[Digtningen om Truelssønnerne synes ligefrem bleven til vel en Sammensmeltning af denne Vise, "De tre Søstre" [Child 14], med den legendariske Vise om "Hr. Truelses Døtre". Det laa saa uhyre nær at sammensmelte dem, fordi samme Ordskifte mellem Røver og Jomfruer forekom i begge, [...] og de lod sig opfatte som lidt forskellige Maader at fortælle samme Begivenhed paa; blandt Sted agnene skal vi snart se Former, som man næppe med Sikkerhed tør henføre til den ene eller den anden af de to Digtninger. - Truelsvisen omarbejdedes da, saa at hele Begyndelsen, der ikke svarede til 'De tre Søstre', indskrænktes til et Vers om at Døtrene gik til Kirke, og Genkendelsessamtalen optoges fra "De tre Søstre" (DgF, 6:121)]

Let us consider briefly the outlines of the two forms. In the 'legend' or West-Nordic case (which Olrik considers to be the elder) a daughter is late in leaving for church because she has slept late and then spent an inordinate amount of time dressing and adorning herself. She rides alone and is murdered *en route*. She is avenged by her father with whom the culprit has sought shelter. In this group, the death can thus be seen as a punishment for female arrogance and love of finery in place of the proper attitude toward church attendance. The excessive nature of the retribution, however, is tempered by the addition of a religious dimension. Lights and a healing spring appear at the murder site and it is later commemorated by the erection of a church. In some areas of Denmark, the analogue ballad is connected with specific sites and the church to be visited is named. Although this is not the case in the Faroese texts, it is clear that the Faroese texts belong to this western, legendary group (a survival at the periphery?). As an aside, Olrik also notes that these particular texts were collected from the 'common people' and do not appear in the collections made by the Danish aristocratic ballad lovers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This he does not find surprising as it might have been difficult for them to appreciate a condemnation of fine clothes and adornment.

The second group is described by Olrik as being 'family tragedy'. Here the incest motif is prominent as the robbers are portrayed as the brothers of the murdered girls. There is little or no mention of the religious aspects connected with the first group. The unfortunate relationship is revealed either by a conversation with a sister at the location of the murder or with the father at the time of the revenge execution. In either case, suicide often follows. The direct comparison of the Scottish and Faroese texts above would appear to indicate that the Faroese follows the West-Nordic form while the Scottish text has a number of motifs similar to the East-Nordic.

In order to understand any possible relationship between the Scottish and Faroese ballads, I intend to follow the prompting of Olrick and to compare the Faroese ballad with its analogues in Norway and Iceland and possibly with an older Danish version. Against that, I will then look at the southern Swedish and later Danish East-Nordic forms in conjunction with the Scottish ballad. One of the problems with this approach is the difficulty of finding the appropriate Norwegian texts.³ Olrik complained that the tradition in Telemark was damaged "by the ravages of time" and that there was no complete version in existence (DgF, 6:116). Ólason expands on this saying "the Norwegian tradition was already in a state of disintegration when collection was started. The conclusion is lost in all variants, except in one where there is a prose summary of the ending which shows that the plot was of the same kind as in the Faroese / Icelandic variants." (Ólason, 1982:181)

The most efficient means of comparison is by motif. In the Faroese ballad, as in Norway, there are two sisters of whom one is murdered and the other exposes the deed. In Iceland, there are three sisters (with some variants having only two). The number of robbers (murderers) is also relatively consistent. In the Faroes there is only one, although Ólason does remind us that the number is progressively reduced from three to one (Ólason, 1982:181). In Iceland the number is one and Norway has either one or two. By contrast, in the East-Nordic tradition there are usually three sisters and three robbers.

One of the most striking motifs in the West-Nordic 'legend' tradition is the light as the symbol of innocence and possibly martyrdom. In Faroese this appears in CCF 176A:

25 Har hennara blóðið dreiv,
tendradist ljós á hvørji leid.

[There where her blood poured,
lights were lit in every direction.]

In Norwegian this is found:

- | | | |
|----|--|--|
| 16 | Så vitt som bloi rann,
høie voksljosi ette brann.
(Blom, 1971:182) | [As far as the blood ran,
tall wax candles burned.] |
|----|--|--|

and in Icelandic this is ÍFkv 15A

- | | | |
|----|---|---|
| 14 | Það sást upp í heim,
ljós brann yfir báðum þeim. | [It was seen above there,
a light burned over them all.] |
|----|---|---|

Ólason's suggestion is that:

It is most likely that the light is a west-Nordic innovation which in Iceland and Norway has entirely taken over the function of the spring in the East-Nordic variants. This kind of miracle, a light burning on a grave, is attested in the saga of King Sverrir, *Sverris saga*, from the early 13th century. (Ólason, 1982:180-81)

Using this oecotypical motif, Ólason also concludes:

When the West-Nordic versions have a special form of miracle, this indicates that the ballad was brought to the Faroes and Iceland from Norway. This conclusion is supported by a number of verbal parallels in the West-Nordic texts. The similarities between the Icelandic and the Faroese variants are striking, but it is not easy to find examples of a special relationship in the Norwegian texts. (Ólason, 1982:181)

The additional symbols of spring and church in the Faroese texts have not been considered here for they are what might connect that tradition with that of the East-Nordic and will be mentioned below.

It was mentioned above that the West-Nordic tradition had, in fact, covered most of the Scandinavian area until the expansion of the East-Nordic version. A further example of this is the example of an older Danish version, DgF 338A, "Hr Truelses Døtre". In this version, Hr. Truel has three daughters (an Eastern trait) who sleep too long in the morning. On being roused, they take some considerable time to dress:

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| 5 | De lytted efter den lille Lærke
saa klædte de dem Silkesærke. | They listened to the little lark
then dressed themselves in
silk shifts. |
|---|--|--|

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| 6 | Saa toge de [paa] dennen det røde Guld.
ja, deres Fingre de satte alt fulde. | They put on that red gold.
yes, [even] their fingers were
covered. |
| 7 | Saa gik de dennen i Højenstue,
en silkekjole de paa dem drog. | Then they went upstairs,
and put on a silk frock. |
| 8 | Saa gik de dennen i Højenloft
en silkekaabe de over dem drog. | Then they went into the high hall
and put on a silk cape. |
| 9 | Saa tog de deres Handsker pa,
saa vilde de dennen til Kirken gaa. | They put on their gloves
then they went off to church. |

This is not quite as elaborate as indicated in the Faroese stanzas 7-12 but it is definitely comparable (a West-Nordic trait). They quickly meet three robbers (an eastern trait),

- | | | |
|----|---|--|
| 10 | Og der de kom til Borgeled
der stode tre Røvere at hvile dervel. | When they came to Borgeled
three robbers stood at ease there. |
|----|---|--|

who give them the unvarying choice and receive the inevitable answer:

- | | | |
|----|---|---|
| 13 | "Enten vil I være tre Røveres Viv,
eller og I vil lade jert unge Liv?" | "Will you be three robbers
wives?
or will you lose your young
lives?" |
| 14 | "Nej, hverken vil vi være tre
Røveres Viv,
heller vi vil og lade vores unge Liv." | "We would neither be three
robbers' wives,
nor would we [like] to lose our
young lives." |

These two stanzas would certainly appear to be the official insignia of this particular ballad type. The rape of the girls is then quite baldly stated as is their murder. The robbers appear at the Truel family home, ask to have a room, and have their gold recognised by the mother (an Eastern trait) who then goes to the castle for help. The robbers are tortured before their death. There is no mention of any family relationship between the girls and their murderers.

DgF 338C is another of these western Danish ballads, again with three daughters and three robbers but this time there is an invitation to the mother to sleep with the robbers; she asks for a sight of the payment for such an action, recognises her daughters' silk shifts, and summons the father and servants for assistance. The robbers are apprehended, tortured and killed. Perhaps the most elegant of these older versions is DgF 338F, recorded in 1776 on the island of Møen. This version is similar to the

others already mentioned but has as the second part of its refrain, the beautiful line, "Silke drager de Roser" [the roses [maids] wear silk]. What is missing in these versions is the entire dimension of the religious and miraculous which in the Norwegian, Faroese and Icelandic produced the light over the corpses. Like these versions, however, there is no mention of any sons – for the sons belong to the East-Nordic group.

An example of this grouping is the late 1850s Danish version 338H collected by Eskeson in the Haderslev area. The second refrain line is again "Silke saa drejer de Roser" but the storyline is different. Here we start with Hr. Tor's sons, stolen by robbers when they were small boys on their way to school:

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| 3 | Ja de skulde dem til Skole gaa,
af Røvere blev de stjaalne bort.. | [Yes, they were to go to school,
but robbers stole them away.] |
|---|--|---|

When Hr. Tor's daughters are dressing to go to church, there is only one stanza allotted to the preparations although it does concentrate on the fact that they covered themselves with gold. In the very next stanza they meet three robbers and are faced with the inevitable question and give the standard answer. Again the rape and murder are explicitly stated and the robbers go on to Hr. Tor's house. The attempt is made to seduce Fr. Tor, the robbers show her the gold they are offering and she recognises it as belonging to her daughters. The robbers are overcome and beg time to explain their origins. Hr. Tor then tells the men:

- | | | |
|----|--|---|
| 33 | "Og er det nu dandt, som je haver hørt,
jeres tre kær' Søstre I haver afmördt." | ["And if what I have heard is
true,
you have murdered your three
dear sisters."] |
|----|--|---|

Hr. Tor. offers them horses to leave but they decline and offer themselves up, a life for a life:

- | | | |
|----|---|---|
| 36 | "Nej, vi vil ikk' al Landet rømme,
men vi vil gi' Blod for Blod igen." | ["No, we won't flee from the
land,
but will give back a life for a
life."] |
|----|---|---|

They are executed and Hr. Tor has lost all his children which is, indeed, a family tragedy.

A further look at ballads that belongs to the "family tragedy" group, may show us even more differences from the Faroese text. In the first instance below, the example

On hearing that he has killed his own sons, Tyres drops his sword and asks God's mercy. He and his wife vow to build a church in their village as penance. This is a very early example that still shows a few signs of the West Nordic tradition (such as details of dress and the building of a church) but is without doubt part of the 'family tragedy' group. This particular version does not end in the suicide of the father and / or mother as many other versions do and it is also lacking the springs that appear in many other similar versions.

If we return once again to the Scottish ballad, we can now appreciate its simplicity. There is no religious element whatsoever; the girls are simply out picking flowers (whatever that might imply). They meet with a robber who, hard to believe, overcomes all three of them. As in the DgF 338F, the third daughter offers resistance. But where, in the Danish version, it is only to ask the robbers to spend the night at Hr. Truel's house (thus setting the scene for the detection of the crime), the Scottish versions have her make clear to the robber that they are brother and sister.

Now that we have travelled round this comparative circle, it is clear that the Scottish ballad has little more in common with the Faroese ballad than the stock question and answer that is the literary signature of the ballad type, for the Faroese ballad finds its closest relatives in Iceland and Norway. Ólason explains it thus:

The most natural explanation is that the Faroese and the Icelandic versions each derive from an older layer of the West-Nordic tradition which must have developed its characteristics in Norway. This means that the ballad must have been brought to Iceland no later than c 1500, and there is no linguistic or stylistic evidence to contradict this conclusion. (Ólason, 1982:182)

Since the Faroese version also includes the spring and the church, it could also be argued that that tradition had been subject at some later date to influence from the East-Nordic tradition through the colonial and linguistic power of Denmark but these particular elements are not ones that are present in the Scottish ballad. While Olrik judged that the Scottish ballad was involved in the development of the East-Nordic tradition, there has been no discernible interchange of influence between the Scottish and Faroese ballads which remain the products of different traditions.

NOTES

¹ Although this is not a widespread ballad in Scotland, it has remained in tradition into the late twentieth century. There is a version from Minnie Haman in *The Muckle Sangs* and the singer, Malcolm MacLeod, currently performs a version acquired from his mother

² Toelken appears to have found a source for the interpretation of this symbolism in Gerd Heinz-Mohr and Volker Sommer (1988).

³ The proposed master collection of Norwegian ballads has not yet been published.

Chapter 8

Clerk Colvill (Child 42) and Ólavur Riddararós (CCF 154)

"Clerk Colvill" (Child 42) is a difficult ballad to study. Most often such difficulty occurs because there is little material available. In this case, however, the opposite is the case. Indeed it has been pointed out to me that this ballad and its analogues have generated an "industry" of scholarship (Syndergaard 1996). The reason is simple: the ballad has been judged (though not without objections – see below) to belong to a general story type, known as "Elveskud", that is found throughout the length and breadth of Western Europe – from Scandinavia to Iceland and from Catalonia through Italy to Bohemia. In spite of its wide distribution, however, Child only records three early texts in Scotland.

The general story outline concerns a young man about to be (or recently) married who has a meeting with a probable mistress (often a supernatural) whom he spurns. In revenge, she brings about his imminent death which occurs after his return home. The death is then concealed, by numerous excuses, from the wife / bride until it is finally revealed. The ballad thus has three main parts: the first concerns the meeting that brings about the death, the second concerns the arrival home and the actual death, the third concerns the concealing of the death and its final revelation. It is to be noted that the distribution of versions of the ballad falls generally into two categories. Most of the versions in continental Europe are concerned only with parts two and three, that is, they start with the arrival home of a dying man. There is no mention of a mistress and the wounds are attributed to war or accident. Great stress is then laid on protecting the wife / bride from knowledge of the death. The Nordic and Scottish versions, on the other hand, are without this third part and lay their emphasis on the supernatural cause of death. The exceptions are the Breton *gwerz* of "An Aotrou Nann" and the English compilations (for which see below). These both consist of all three sections (see Figure 8.1). For this reason, many have seen the Breton ballad as the source of the entire complex

Because it is so widespread, the "Elveskud" type has been used by many scholars in an attempt to trace the path of diffusion between Brittany and Scandinavia. There are two obvious routes: one that runs east through the Low Countries and Germany to Denmark, and the other that runs north through the British Isles to Scandinavia by way of the northern isles of Orkney and Shetland. The German route initially appears attractive in that there is a famous Middle High German poem of

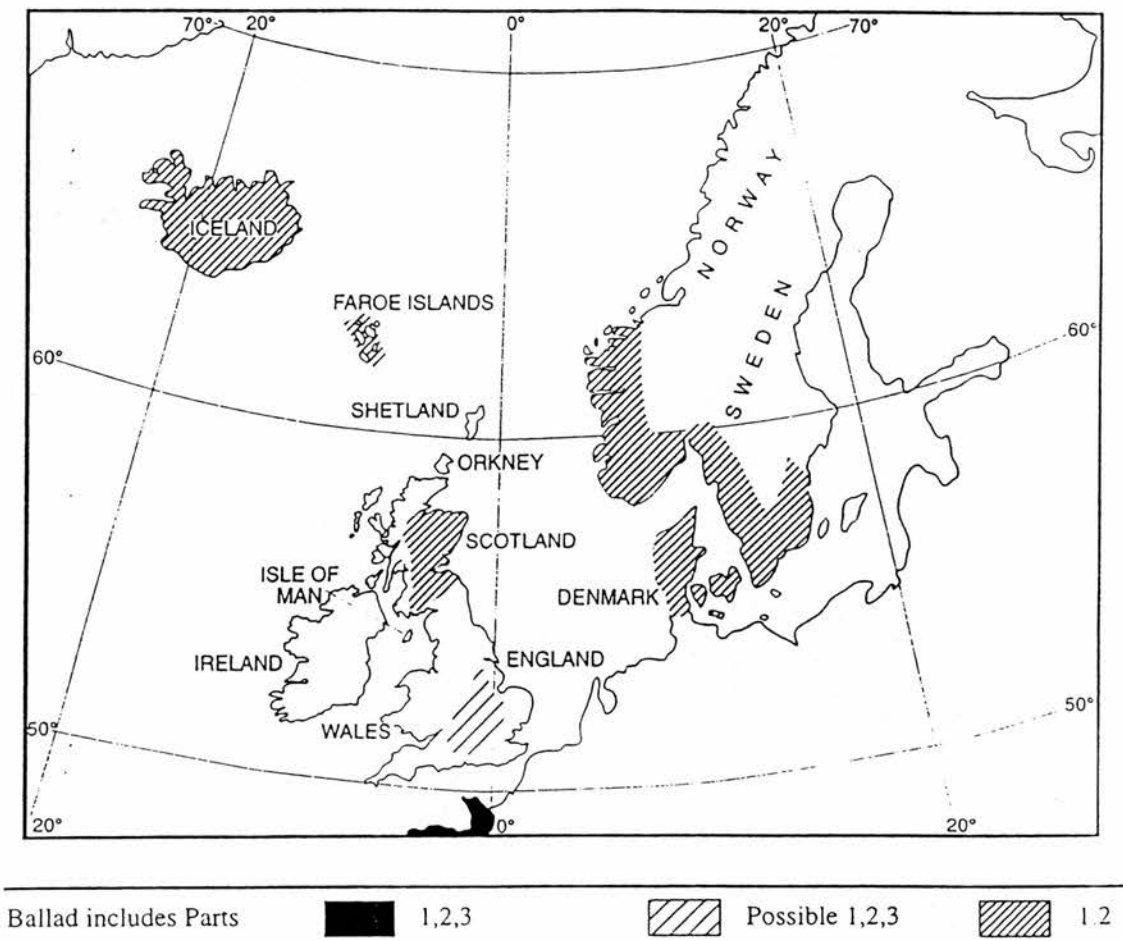


Figure 8.1 Distribution of Types analogous to "Clerk Colvill" (Child 42)

c.1310 concerning a knight, Peter von Staufenberg, who had a supernatural mistress. On the other hand, that poem has only that one point in common with the "Elveskud" type and it is considerably earlier than logical to fit in with the proposed pattern of ballad expansion while retaining its position as one of the related underlying folktales. More telling, however, is the fact that there are no ballads from Germany that might be considered analogous to the type.

The second possible route lay through England and Scotland. In this case, Scotland would have played a role as intermediary. Whereas an English compilation *might* consist of all three story parts, the Scottish "Clerk Colvill", like the Scandinavian versions, lacks the third part. Parker found that "the relationship between Clerk Colvill and its Scandinavian analogues does, in fact, provide the least ambiguous demonstration of connection between the two traditions". Kuhn (1997:2) is much more cautious and suggests that the connection between the Scandinavian and the British "Elfshot" ballads are generally "on the content level, not on the textual or product level". The version in the Faroes, "Ólavur Riddararós", was considered by Child (1:74) and Grundtvig (DgF 4:865) to be the Scandinavian version most similar to "Clerk Colvill". This, in turn, led many researchers concerned with ballad diffusion to look again at the origin of "Clerk Colvill", its relationship to "Ólavur Riddararós" and their role in the spread of the West Scandinavian versions. Liestøl agreed with Child and Grundtvig and considered the Scottish ballad to have had its Nordic contact point in the Shetland Islands (Liestøl, 1909; 1946:16). Nolsøe saw similarities between the versions but saw the connection as being through Norway rather than directly between the Faroes and Scotland (Nolsøe 1982a:44). Bengt Jonsson, however, favoured a form of polygenesis where more than one text had been created from a single written source – which source he posited for historical reasons as existing in Norway – reaching Scotland through the Faroe Islands and Shetland (Jonsson 1992:79, 87). Polygenesis was also favoured by the Faroese writer D.J. Niclasen who saw the creation of "Ólavur Riddararós" as being uniquely Faroese. He described this version as reaching Scotland, among other areas, before the Faroese version was subject to dilution by other West Scandinavian versions (Niclasen 1947:165-6). Forslin, on the other hand, saw both routes as active in the dissemination of the ballad from a generally accepted source in Brittany: through Germany to Denmark and through England and Scotland to Faroes and Iceland (Forslin 1962:75). But the Faroese version showed, according to Forslin, motifs of types similar to those in the majority of Danish versions as well as those similar to the Breton version. That was to be explained (cf. Niclasen) by the fact that the original Faroese ballad had come under the influence of the Danish versions through the spread of the collection edited by Peder Syv. This volume had been

published in Copenhagen in 1695 and was very popular in all Scandinavian areas (Forslin 1962:61). As this is only a sample of the relevant scholarship, the question of origin and direction of influence between Scotland and the Faroes would appear to have as many answers as interested parties. None of the above-named scholars, however, publicly compared the texts, verse by verse, for more detailed similarities or differences.

The Scottish and Faroese ballad versions are not dissimilar but the basic question of what constitutes a ballad type is difficult. Nicolaisen has criticised the general concept of "Elveskud" by pointing out that the only common feature across the entire spectrum of versions is that a son goes to his mother to tell her he is about to die (Nicolaisen 1992:37). This is probably quite true although the Faroese version lacks this specific expression and it must be inferred. The story lines, however, are like enough to allow some comparison of how the two areas deal with a similar theme. This we can do in terms of structure and content – thus moving from the more abstract to the more concrete.

Structural analysis has been used in the past on the general "Elveskud" type. The most famous example is that of Svend Grundtvig. It was he who determined that the ballad type had a European-wide distribution and gave it the generic name of "Elveskud" – best translated, perhaps, as "Elfshot", the inexplicable cause of illness and death in humans and animals. Grundtvig worked outwards from the Danish versions in the Karen Brahe folio and that published in Syv's ballad collection (Syv 1695: No. 87). He noted the popularity of the ballad that had seen it translated into English by Jamieson in his *Popular Ballads and Songs* (1:29) and into German by Herder in his *Volkslied* (2:2, no. 27). From there, Grundtvig proceeded to deal with other European versions. He felt that "This ballad is suitable in the highest degree to cast light on the essence of folk poetry and life in general. And it is well worth while to make it the subject for a thorough-going comparative study" (DgF 4:852). This study was first to encompass only the Nordic forms and then to be expanded to include the other European analogues. To do this he took all the Nordic versions known to him but gave prominence to the Danish A version (from the Brahe manuscript). His idea then was to attempt to determine the main story line and variations by using three sizes of type. These he likened to a tree trunk with branches and leaves. The ballad he then considered in twelve sections, each of which involved a single action, e.g. 'The knight's departure from his home' or 'The meeting with the elves' etc. In each case, a particular motif was judged as to whether it was part of the main story line or a variation on that theme (DgF 4:852-3).

The problem with this is that there are no final conclusions drawn; there is no easily accessible table of 'results'; there is a considerable degree of abstraction and no examination of the finer details such as comparisons of modes of expression (e.g. commonplaces). On the other hand, however, for an examination of Nordic examples which Grundtvig stated were all actually very close to one another, such points were probably not so important because the related languages used tended to employ similar formulaic expressions.

In the same vein of gross structural abstractions, an interesting sidelight on these two ballads is to see how they meet Vladímir Propp's syntagmatic model for the *märchen* as set forth in *The Morphology of the Folktale* (1968:26-30).¹ What the ballads have in common with the *märchen* is that both are narratives dealing with the supernatural. These ballads do differ considerably from the *märchen*, however, in that there is no happy ending. In addition, since the ballad concentrates on a single incident as against the *märchen's* series of experiences, the full panoply of Propp's schema is not relevant.

If, however, we alter the requirement in Propp's first functions to the extent of allowing that his figure 'family member' be used instead for our 'chief character', then the first eight functions of the model do indeed apply. These functions (F) and the examples from the texts are:

F1. One of the members of a family absents himself from home.

The departure of the hero in the Child text is implicit in verse 2 "When ye gang to the wall o Stream" but is made explicit:

He mounted on his berry-brown steed,
And merry, merry rade he on. (4)

In Faroese, we are immediately introduced to the departure:

"Hvort skaltú ríða Ólavur mín?" (1)	["Where are you riding to, my Olav?"]
"Eg fari mær á heiði." (2)	["I am going to the heath."]

F2. An interdiction is addressed to the hero.

"When ye gang to the wall o Stream,
O gang nae near the well-fared may." (2)

is the Scottish text while, in the Faroese version this takes the form of a prophecy, given after the destination is identified:

"Men tú fert til tina leika-lind" (3)
 ["You are really going to your leman."]

"Hvit ertú skjurtan, væl er hon tvigin,
 í blóði verður hon af tær drigin." (4)
 ["Your shirt is white, it is well washed,
 all bloody it will be taken off you."]

F3. The interdiction is violated.

In Scotland, we find:

And merry, merry rade he on
 Till he came to the wall o Stream,
 And there he saw the mermaiden. (4)

Which is really quite similar in spirit to the Faroese:

Ólavur ríður efter björgunum fús,
 fann hann á eitt elvar-hus. (8)
 [Olav rode eagerly along the cliffs,
 found an elfin house.]

F4. The villain makes an attempt at reconnaissance.

F5. The villain receives information about his victim.

These functions may be considered together because, in our ballads, the chief character and the maid appear to be well acquainted with each other. This is shown, at least to some extent, by the fact that, in the Faroese texts, the maid greets her visitor as "Ólavur Riddararós" (11) and that his mother has already accused him of going off to visit his mistress. (3). A similar situation seems to apply to Clark Colven who has been warned away from the mermaid at the wall o Stream – but who then rides directly there.

- F6. The villain attempts to deceive his victim in order to take possession of him by means of disguise, persuasion, magical means or other means of deception or coercion.

The mermaid entices Clark Colven with:

"It's a' for you, ye gentle knight,
My skin is whiter than the milk." (5)

Whereas, in Faroese, the elf with the long, braided hair sweetly invites:

"Ver vælkomin, Ólavur Riddararós,
tú gakk í dansin og kvøð for os." (11)
["Welcome, proud knight Olav,
join the dance and sing for us."]

- F7. The victim submits to deception and thereby unwittingly helps his enemy.

There is no doubt here in the case of Clark Colven because:

He's taen her by the milk-white hand,
He's taen her by the sleeve sae green,
And he's forgotten his gay ladie.
And away with the fair maiden. (7)

The situation in Faroese is more complicated. The hero has stated that he can no longer resort to the elves; they are displeased and require him to choose his own punishment. He does so and thus confirms their power:

"Fyrr vil eg í morgin til molder gá,
enn eg vil sjei vintur liggja á strá" (21)
["I would rather be a corpse tomorrow,
than lie sick for seven years."]

- F8. The villain causes harm or injury to a member of a family including murder.

A lacuna in the Scottish texts exists at this point and there is no explanation as to how Colven receives his death blow. The following stanza, where the maid offers a bandage cut from her petticoat, makes it quite clear that murder was the intent:

"Ohon, alas!" says Clark Colven,
 "And aye sae sair's I mean my head."
 And merrily laughed the mermaid,
 "It will ay be war till ye be dead." (10)

The Faroese text is more direct:

Hon skonkti honum í drykkjuhorn
 har fór í tað eiturskorn. (25)
 [She poured out [drink] for him into the drinking horn
 which contained that poisoned grain.]

Tann fyrsta drykkin, ið Ólavur drakk,
 hans breiða belti um hann sprakk. (26)
 [That first drink that Olav drank
 his wide belt around him burst.]

At this point, Propp's functions cease to be relevant. In the *märchen* the last of these eight functions is the actual start of the story and the first seven functions are seen as the 'preparatory part' of the tale, the setting of the scene and the point at which the villainy is exhausted (Propp, 1968:34).² What follows in the *märchen* is a resolution of the thus-created situation whereas what follows in the ballad is likewise a resolution – the fulfilling of the warnings given at the start of the ballad.

A more exhaustive structural analysis of the putative "Elveskud" in its international manifestations was conducted by Alfild Forslin. The initial study was done in 1934 and was expanded and published in 1962. Forslin intentionally followed a pattern similar to Grundtvig although she used twice as many texts (113), many of which had been unknown to Grundtvig. She accepted the division of the ballad story into three sections (see above) which she then divided into episodes in a manner different from Grundtvig. She also used the Danish versions as the base because "they are the richest and most homogeneous" (Forslin 1962:16). Each narrative episode is assigned a letter: a capital letter if the episode is important in the national tradition, a lower case letter if it is less important. Then the appropriate motifs are labelled numerically. Thus in the episode of the knight's departure, the reasons given either involve a wedding (noted as A¹) or hunting (noted as A²). (Forslin 1962:40-41) In this way the ballad versions are reduced to formulae. These quickly indicated to Forslin that there was a distinct difference between the Danish and Breton forms (i.e. between the Scandinavian and West-European types) with the former having a preponderance of superscript '1' designations and the latter superscript '2'.

With particular regard to the Faroese versions, Forslin noted the peculiar situation that Scandinavian (superscript 1) and West-European (superscript 2) motifs appear side by side in almost equal numbers. This places the Faroese versions (and those of Iceland) on Forslin's scale somewhere between Norway and Scotland (Forslin 1962:41, 60). Forslin was suspicious of a number of motifs which she felt might have entered the local Faroese versions after the appearance in the Faroes of Peder Syv's published ballad collection. Such motifs included the elf's invitation to dance when, in Faroese folklore, such beings do not dance but do indeed offer drinks to their guests. This is illustrated in verses 23-25 where, in reply to Olav's choice of death, the elf pours him a drink which includes a grain of poison. The Faroese versions are the only ones where drink is offered and is the proximate cause of death. It might also be remembered that there is no farther mention of dancing (after the initial invitation) in the Faroese whereas it plays an important role in other Scandinavian versions. For example, in the Norwegian "Olaf Lilljukrans" (Landstad:355), Olaf is four times invited to dance by the elves and four times declines even though he is thrice offered some inducement. The offers vary from a silk-sewn cape to two goatskins full of coins, but the last offer is an elfin daughter.

- 10 Velkomen Olaf, troð dans með meg!
 með kvitari hand,
 me yngste dotter geve eg deg,
 Sá móð kem Olaf af elvo.
 [Welcome Olaf, come dance with me!
 of the whitest hand
 I will give you my youngest daughter,
 Thus sadly came Olaf from the elves.]
- 11 Di yngste dotter eg agtar 'ki pá
 og danse með deg eg inki má.
 [I am not interested in your youngest daughter,
 and I won't dance with you.]

Before the elf strikes Olaf on the shoulders, thus inflicting the fatal elfshot, Olaf is warned:

- 16 Og vil du inki danse með meg,
 sótt og sjúkdóm skal fy'gje deg!
 [So, if you won't dance with me,
 disease and illness will haunt you!]

Forslin noted that, if the main Danish-type motifs are removed, the remaining motifs (a string of West-European types) may well be representative of an older,

genuine Faroese ballad, as it was prior to the influence of Syv. Thus, for Forslin, the Faroese "Ólavur Riddararós" is mid-way between the West-Nordic and the West-European forms while at the same time displaying its own Faroese local colour and its own distinctive forma.³ (Forslin 1962:61)

The Scottish "Clerk Colvill", on the other hand, is rated as having a unified series of superscript 2 motifs which is a schema running parallel to the Breton *gwerz*. This is, however, a similarity only at this level of abstraction for a closer examination shows the motifs in the Scottish and Breton ballads are not identical. Forslin then compares "Clerk Colvill" with the Danish ballads and finds a lack of correspondence because the superscript 2 motifs rarely appear in Danish tradition. From this Forslin deduces that "Clerk Colvill" did not come to Scotland from Denmark but rather from Brittany through England (Forslin 1962: 67), and that it went from there to the Faroes and to Iceland (Forslin 1962: 74-75).

The most prominent critic of Forslin's work has been Vésteinn Ólason of Iceland. The basis of his objection lies in the nature of the analysis and its degree of abstraction. It is summed up by his comment: "In this way, a list of motifs of the individual versions of the ballad can give a picture altogether different from that which is obvious to anyone who confronts the texts" (Ólason 1982:118).

Let us, then, confront the texts, verse by verse, to find the similarities and differences. The texts reproduced here are Child A (noted as being from the ms. of W.T. Brown) and CCF 154A (from the collection of J.H. Schrøter).

Scottish

Faroese

- 1 Clerk Colven and his gay ladie,
As they walked to yon garden green,
A belt about her middle gimp,
Which cost Clerk Colven crowns fifteen.

The initial verse sets out a scene and gives a brief introduction to the main character in the Scottish ballad, Clerk Colvill (though, in version A he is called Clerk Colven (see above) and in version C he is called Clerk Colin). The lady is not identified although the second verse might seem to indicate that she is a wife or fiancée. The description of her belt is interesting and is one of the many 'misplaced' motifs that Parker considers to have been borrowed from the Scandinavian. In this case, a "gullband um hans herðar lá" [a gold chain lay around his shoulders] is to be found in the Faroese B version only and refers to Olav himself (Parker 1952:66). A similar

necklace is indeed to be found around the neck of Clerk Colin's mother (Scottish version C) but the relationship may only be in the use of a commonplace to describe a wealthy character. There is no equivalent introduction in any of the Faroese versions.

- 1 "Hvort skaltú ríða, Ólavur
mín?
– *Kol og smiður við –*
í lofti hongur brynja tín."
Ungir kallar, kátir kallar!
gangið upp á gólv,
dansið lystug.
["Where are you riding
to, my Olav?
– *Coal and Smith as well*
your armour is hanging up
Young men, happy lads!
go onto the floor, dance
merrily.]
- 2 "Eg fari mær á heiði,
tá villini hind at veiða."
["I am going to the heath,
to hunt a wild hind."]
- 3 "Tú fert ikki at veiða hind,
men tú fert til tina leika-lind.
["You are not going to
hunt a hind,
you are really going to
your leman."]

The introduction to the Faroese ballad involves an address by an unknown person, presumably female and later (verse 6) shown to be Olav's mother. The names Colin (in any of the Scottish forms) and Olav (in any of the Nordic forms) have been suggested as connected by Grundtvig, Parker, Nicolaisen and Jonsson, among others, on the basis that the reduction from the three-syllable general Nordic 'Herr Olof' required the addition of some prefix in Scots. The appellation 'Clerk' (without religious connotation) is not uncommon (cf. Clerk Sanders etc.). The 'K' at the end of Clerk then invited the addition of a 'K' sound before the following vowel. In this way, Her Olaf became Clerk (C)olven (see Nicolaisen, 1992:37).

The Faroese stanza consists of a question concerning Olav's destination since he is leaving his armour behind. There is no such question in the Scottish version, nor is there any indication from Colvin as to his destination. There is a Faroese answer but

it is not truthful and it is immediately challenged in verse three. There is an inference that this may not be the first trip of a similar nature made by Olav.

2 "O hearken weel now, my good lord,
O hearken weel to what I say
When ye gang to the wall o Stream
O gang nae neer the well-fared may".

4 "Hvit er tín skjurtan,
væl er hon skorin
í bloði verður hon af
tær drigin."
["Your shirt is white, it is
well washed,
all bloody it will be taken
off you."]

5 Hvit er tín skjurtan, væl er
hon skorin,
í bloði so verður hon aftur
borin."
["Your shirt is white, it is
well cut,
it will be carried back
bloodstained.]"

Since the Scottish ballad asked no questions, it appears that the answer was already known.... "When ye gang to the wall o Stream". The identity of 'the wall o Stream' is unclear. Child's glossary gives the term 'wall' in "Clerk Colvill" as meaning 'well' or 'spring'. In "Sir Patrick Spens", 5th verse of version B, 'wall' is assigned the meaning of a deep part of the river Tay:

The water at St. Johnston's wall
Was fifty fathom deep.

This would also be reasonable in Clerk Colvill, given the description "o Stream" and would accommodate the mermaid's dive in verse 11 "into the fleed". A more localised suggestion concerns the possible association of the ballad with the 'Loch o' Stream' on mainland Shetland (Parker 1952:284-5). Whatever the location, the warning is simply to avoid the maid. Buchan has shown that this warning was well advised because, in Scottish ballads of the supernatural, human involvement with a land-based being has a positive conclusion whereas human involvement with a water-based being always ends in death for one of the parties (Buchan 1991:67). In the Faroese, the warning is unique among the Nordic variants and it is dire. The destination is not any body of water but the end result will be the same. Parker has also noted that these first Faroese stanzas are paralleled by those of a Norwegian ballad cited by Grundtvig as a variant of the Danish "Frillens hævn" [Mistress' Revenge] known as "Herre Per og Gjödalín". The translation here is by Parker:

- 1 Herre Per comes riding into the courtyard
His mother was standing out there, she was wrapped in sable.
- 2 O hark you, Sir Per, my son,
Why do you saddle your courser so early?
- 3 I am saddling my courser for this reason,
I saw such a good hind of the heath.
- 4 Oh, that was not any hind of the heath,
but Gjöðalin is playing in your mind.
- 5 Sir Per drew on his clean shirt,
but it will be bloody before you come home.
- 6 And the shirt was both washed and ironed,
but it will be drawn off you in blood.
- 7 And Sir Per rode out of the yard,
left his mother standing and wringing her hands.
(Parker 1952:40)

Here we return to the direct comparison of the Scottish and Faroese texts.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>3 "O haud your tongue, my gay ladie,

Tak nae sic care o me;
For I nae saw a fair woman
I like so well as thee."</p> | <p>6 Ólavur snuðist síni móður
frá:
"Gud gevi ikki ganga, sum
mær er spáð!"
[Olav turned away from
his mother,
"God grant it does not
happen as foretold me!"]</p> |
| <p>4 He mounted on his berry-brown steed,
And merry, merry rade he on,
Till he came to the wall o Stream,
And there he saw the mermaiden.</p> | <p>7 Ólavur riður eftir björgunum
framm,
fann uppá eitt elvarrann
[Olav rode along the
cliffs,
came upon an elfin-
house.]</p> |
| | <p>8 Ólavur ridur eftir björgunum
fús,
fann hann á eitt elvar-hús.
[Olav rode eagerly along
the cliffs,
found an elfin-house.]</p> |

9 Út kom eitt tað elvar-fljóð,
flættað hár á herðar dró.
[Out came one of the elfin
troop,
braided hair hung to [her]
shoulders.]

10 Út kom ein af elvunum tá,
flættað hár á herðar lá.
[Then out came one of the
elves,
braided hair lying on
[her] shoulders.]

Colven reassures his lady that she has nothing to worry about. Olav simply leaves fervently wishing that what has been foretold will not happen. The journey is then described. In the Scottish ballad, a light-hearted Colven rides to the mermaid at the wall o Stream. The Faroese Olav is depicted as riding along the mountains then finding an elf house. For Olav, the rendezvous is with an elf with seductively plaited hair. For Colven the meeting is with a mermaid. The question of the origin of the mermaid is interesting because no other country offers a version involving a water-being. Bayard promoted the idea of ballad diffusion through Ireland. The mermaid is then an example of the Celtic concept of the Banshee 'washerwoman at the ford' (see Lysaght, 1986). Part of this argument makes reference to the American ballad "Johnny Collins" (see below) and the areas where it is found (Bayard 1945:98-100).

This was refuted by Parker who proceeded to present his own thesis that the ballad came to Scotland from Scandinavia. The mermaid then appeared from the translation of the elf from a land-based Otherworld being to a water-based being when the ballad travelled through the Orkney and Shetland Islands. In these islands, humans did not mate with the trows (the local land-based supernatural beings) but did do so with the selkies or mer-folk (Parker 1945:278-9).

5 "Ye wash, ye wash, ye bonny may,
And ay's ye wash your sark o silk:"
"It's a' for you, ye gentle knight,
My skin is whiter than the milk."

In the initial address, Colven comments on the washing of a 'sark' or shirt. This might be an intrusion of the above-mentioned motif of the Celtic washerwoman at the ford who is a harbinger of death (Lysaght, 1986) but this is not likely. The question of the symbolism of the shirt, however, remains. Liestøl and Moe saw such a shirt as a love gift from a girl to her fiancé. A woman made such a shirt as a sign she was

willing to give her love (Liestøl 1924, 3:178). In other Scandinavian versions, the shirt is only one of several gifts offered. Toelken saw the shirt in many ballads (including this one) and even in Anglo-Saxon riddles, as being associated with lovers and often, indeed, with the "double theme of fertility and death" (Toelken 1995:117). Parker carried this notion further. He saw it as a love offering which would also explain the mermaid's reply, "It's a' for you, ye gentle knight" (Parker 1952:79). This motif is then linked to the shirt mentioned by the mother in the Faroese verses four and five, – "It is well washed" and "It is well cut" [væl er hon skotin] which is then looped back to be associated with the Scottish reference to Colven as having "shorn a gare" (verse 8), since the verbs 'skera' and 'shear' are cognate (Parker 1952:81). This is an interesting speculation but is perhaps no more than that. (Sometimes a cigar is just a cigar?)

- 11 "Ver vælkomin, Ólavur
Riddararós!
tú gakk í dansin og kvøð for
os!"
["Welcome, proud knight
Olav,
join the dance and sing
for us."]

In the Faroese encounter, the elf speaks first and in a formal manner. Where Colven is met with an open offer of seduction, Olav is greeted and invited to dance. He is, in fact, honoured by being invited to lead the dance as the singer in charge. On the face of it, this is an innocent invitation, but it is well known in Northern Europe that dancing with Otherworld beings is hazardous in the extreme. Thus the refusal of Olaf to dance with the elf in the Norwegian example mentioned above may have had a cause additional to the stated one of impending marriage. This motif, however, may also be an indicator of outside influence on the ballad for, as mentioned above, Faroese Otherworld beings are not normally associated with the dance although there is a concept of the *huldre-slaat* (underground music).

- 6 He's taen her by the milk-white hand,
He's taen her by the sleeve sae green,
And he's forgotten his gay ladie,
And away with the fair maiden.

Colven offers no resistance to the lady's offer. Andersen notes that the act of taking someone "by the milk-white hand" or by the sleeve, arm or middle, is a situation formula that normally precedes an act of rape or seduction (Andersen 1982:161,163).

There is no similar situation in the Faroese, for Olav is a man of words where Colven is a man of action (see below concerning the use of the knife).

- 12 "Tú tort ikki flætta títt hár
for meg:
eg eri ikki komin at biðja
teg."
["You need not have
braided your hair for
me
I have not come to court
you."]
- 13 "Ertú ikki komin at biðja
meg,
eg havi ikki aktað at eiga
teg."
["If you have not come to
court me,
I don't want you."]
- 14 "Eg kann ikki meira hjá
elvum bó:
í morgin skal eg mítt brullup
snó.
["I can't stay with the
elves any more,
I celebrate my wedding
tomorrow.]
- 15 Eg kann ikki longur hjá
elvum vera:
í morgin lati eg mítt brullup
gera."
[I can't stay with the elves
any longer,
I am getting married
tomorrow."]

Where Colven succumbs, Olav resists. He tells the elf he has not come to court her (though perhaps 'seek her favours' might be equally accurate) and she denies her hold on him. He then explains that the reason for this apparent change is his upcoming marriage. The two important words here are "meira" [more] and "longur" [longer] which indicate past contact. This text is the only Nordic version to use these words. In fact, the other three Faroese versions say simply "I won't stay with the elves". Kuhn

notes that this is unique as is the initial, elaborate departure scene which is also unknown in Scandinavia and missing or minimal (version D only) in the other Faroese texts (Kuhn 1997:6).

16 "Viltú ikki meira hjá elvum bó,
sjúkur skaltú títt brullup snó.
["If you won't stay with
the elves any more,
you will be ill when you
celebrate your wedding.]

17 "Viltú ikki longur hjá elvum
vera,
sjkúkur skaltú títt brullup gera.
["If you won't stay with
the elves any longer,
you will be ill when you
get married.]

Here Olav continues as a man of words. He has angered the elf by ending their apparent relationship and she gives him a choice of life with the elves or illness with his human bride. Here again the Faroese texts differ from those of other Scandinavian areas. Nowhere else is there a choice that includes a long period of illness: it is otherwise a simple choice of life or death. Scottish texts A and B do not indicate any life or death options but this may simply be because this was included in a section that is now missing. Version C, however, does indeed have this motif. This version, which has not previously been mentioned, was described by Child as being corrupt, which is possibly true. It certainly does differ from A and B in that the scene is the river Clyde, and the mermaid invites Clerk Colin to join her in the water. This is followed by what would appear to be a rather large lacuna and the next scene finds a request that the mother make up Colin's bed, that his sister place him in it and that his brother take his bow since Colin's "shooting is done". When Colin is then half asleep, the mermaid again appears and gives him the choice of joining her in the river or of dying in his bed. Colin declines the Otherworld and chooses to stay in bed and die.

The choice in the Faroese text is plainly put and does not please Olav. He gives the matter some consideration and chooses death in a set of repetitive verses where the only changes are in the rhyme. This repetition seems to promote a feeling of involvement on the part of the listener. It is interesting to note that in the Breton *gwerz*, *An Aotro Nann* (also called, *Ar C'hont Tudor*) the hero is faced with a similar choice and gives a similar answer:

26. Pe vervel a reot en heur genta [Now, will you die immediately or
pe chom seiz vla da langissa? spend seven years languishing?]
28. Goël eo gane m'he mervel en [I would rather die immediately than
 heur bresant spend seven years languishing.]
evit chom seiz vlaz e langissant. (text and translation: Constantine, 1996:227).

In the Faroese text we have,

- 18 "Hvat heldur viltú sjei vintur
 liggja sjúk,
 ella viltú í morgin liggja lík?
 ["Would you rather lie ill
 for seven years,
 or else be a corpse
 tomorrow?]
- 19 "Hvat heldur viltú sjei vintur
 liggja á strá,
 ella viltú í morgin til moldar
 gá?"
 ["Would you rather have
 seven years lying
 in bed,
 or else be buried
 tomorrow?"]

Olav has not responded to the first choices and is now presented with a second, more drastic set.

- 20 "Tveir eru kostarnir, hvörgin
 er mjúkur,
 ilt er at liggja leingi sjúkur.
 ["The choices are two,
 neither is agreeable,
 it is not good to lie sick
 for a long time.]
- 21 "Fyrr vil eg í morgin liggja
 lík,
 enn eg vil liggja sjei vintur
 sjúk.
 ["I would rather be a
 corpse tomorrow,
 than I would lie sick for
 seven years.]

- 22 "Fyrr vil eg í morgin til
moldar gá,
enn eg vil sjeý vintur liggja á
strá."
["I would rather go to my
grave tomorrow,
than lie seven years in
bed."]

Olav considers and chooses death in a set of repetitive verses where the only changes are in the rhyme.

- 23 Hon bar framm eitt
drykkjukar,
eiturkornið í tí var.
[She brought out a
drinking horn,
which had a poisoned
grain in it.]

- 24 Hon bar framm eitt
drykkustep,
eiturrkornið í tí fleyt.
[She brought out a
drinking horn,
which had a poisoned
grain floating in it.]

- 25 Hon skonkti honum í
drykkjuhorn,
har fór í tað eiturnkorn.
[She poured him a drink
in the drinking horn
containing the poisoned
grain.]

We can see here that there is no further mention of dancing but rather that the customary Faroese motif of drinking comes to the fore. Death is delivered in a poisoned drink. This vehicle is unique to the Faroes and indeed, only appears in the A and B versions since the others make no mention of the murder method. The use of poison was one of the reasons for Niklasen's claim of antiquity for the Faroese version; he saw it as having been the original method of murder in the ballad (Niklasen 1947:163-4). As noted above, there is no indication of the method used on Colven.

7 "Ohon, alas!" says Clerk Colven,
 "And aye sae sair's I mean my head!"
 And merrily leugh the mermaiden,
 "O win on til you be dead."

26 Tann fyrsta drykkin, íð
 Ólavur drakk,
 hans breiða belti um hans
 sprakk.
 [The first drink that Olav
 drank,
 his wide belt around him
 burst.]

Here we have a direct comparison of the initial results of the murderous action – whatever that may have been in the case of the Scottish version. It is interesting to note that Colven becomes a man of words complaining about the pain in his head whilst Olav's suffering is described in terms of action.

8 "But out ye tak your little pen-knife,
 And frae my sark ye share a gare;
 Row that about your lovely head,
 And the pain ye'll never feel nae mair."

9 Out he has taen his little pen-knife,
 And frae her sark he's shorn a gare,
 Rowed that about his lovely head,
 But the pain increased mair and mair.

Here we have Colven following what appear to be sadistically motivated directions. One immediate interpretation of the use of a bandage cut from the supernatural clothing might be that it is a tool of sympathetic magic continuing the power of the mermaid. This question of a 'bandage' provided Parker with much scope for his ideas of misplaced motifs. Since the Scottish cause of death is missing, the remembered 'bandage' (used in Icelandic versions after a stabbing) was in the Scottish version moved forward and then is supplied with a 'headache' as a cause. Parker himself allows that he might here be "belabouring a mere commonplace" (Parker 1952:73-5). Bayard notes only that there are different reasons in ballads for binding the head. It may be done "to relieve love-sickness" or "to alleviate the mental torture of remorse" (Bayard 1945:77). Both would be appropriate in this case.

10 "Ohon, alas!" says Clerk Colven,
 "An aye sae sair's I mean my head!"
 And merrily laughd the mermaiden,
 "It will ay be war till ye be dead."

27 "Hoyrtú, Ólavur friði!
 tú kyss meg, áðrenn tú
 rídur."
 ["Listen, handsome Olav
 kiss me before you ride
 off."]

- 28 Ólavur studdist við
saðilbuga,
hann kysti tá moy af lítlum
huga.
[Olav leaned on the
saddle bow,
he kissed the maid with
little eagerness.]
- 29 Hann kysti hana so mjúkan,
hon sveik hann so sjúkan.
[He kissed her so gently,
she betrayed him so
badly.]
- 11 Then out he drew his trusty blade,
And thought wi it to be her dead,
But she's become a fish again,
And merrily sprang into the flood.
- 30 "Tú sig tíni móður, tá id tú
kemur heim:
tín foli snublaði um ein
stein."
["Tell your mother when
you get home,
that your horse stumbled
on a stone."]

Here we have sadism and reaction again. Olav is asked for a kiss and half-heartedly obliges. The kiss here serves no real purpose whereas, in the Icelandic version, it is the excuse to have Olav bend down so that he can be more easily stabbed to death (cf. the Scottish "Young Hunting"). Parker views this Faroese kiss as a remnant of the original murder method. This is followed by a request that Olav tell his mother an outright lie in order to explain his dying condition. This would appear to be an echo of other Scandinavian versions which have such excuses although they are not provided by an elf. For Colven, the mermaid's actions provoke reaction as he attempts to murder the maid. This is frustrated by her shape-changing. Colvin is the only victim who attempts retaliation (although not in the Scottish version C). For Parker, this is explained as a motif transferred from 'destroyer to victim' (Parker 1952:78).

- 12 He's mounted on his berry-brown steed,
And dowy, dowy rade he home,
And heavily, heavily lighted down
When to his ladie's bower-door he came.
- 31 Ólavur heim í garðin fór,
úti hans móðir fyri
honum stód.
[Olav went home,
his mother was out in
front to meet him.]

The Scottish description of the homeward ride is metrically appropriate. It is also an echo of the verse which described the outward journey – thus highlighting the

contrast. Olav simply arrives home to find his mother waiting in front of the property. This is a formulaic expression indicating expectation, perhaps, of a problem.

- 32 "Hvi ertú so fölin, hví ertú
so bleik,
sum tú hevði verið í elvar-
leik?"
["Why are you so wan,
why are you so pale,
as if you had been in an
elfin-dance?"]
- 33 "Mín kæra móðir! eg sigi tær
sann
mín foli snublaði um ein
stein.
["My dear mother, I tell
you truly,
my horse stumbled on a
stone.]
- 13 "Oh, mither, mither, mak my bed,
And, gentle ladie, lay me down;
Oh, brither, brither, unbend my bow,
"T will never be bent by me again."
- 34 Tí eri eg fölin, tí eri eg bleik:
í gjár var eg í elvar-leik.
[I am so wan, I am so
pale
[because] yesterday I was
in the elfin dance.]
- 35 Tí eri eg fölin, tí eri eg [sum]
bast:
í gjár var eg í elvar-last."
[I am so wan I am pale as
bast [vegetable fibre],
Yesterday I was in the
elfin-hold."]

Olav is prompted about his appearance and replies first with the lie suggested by the elf. Then he admits the truth in repetitive stanzas. Even as Colven failed to state his destination, so now he fails to explain where he has been. He merely makes requests that indicate he is dying. Olav, in the Faroese A text, has no such requests but, in the C and D texts, he requests a priest. In addition, Olav in version C requests his mother to stay beside him and in D asks his mother to look after his horse.

- 14 His mither she has made his bed,
His gentle ladie laid him down,
His brither he has unbent his bow,
'T was never bent by him again.

- 36 Ólavur vendist till vegginn
brátt,
hann doyði langt fyri midnátt.
[Olav soon turned to the
wall,
he died long before
midnight.]

Death is forthrightly and briefly stated in the Faroese. The Scottish texts (with the exception of version C) are not so blunt. Where Colin in C boldly states his intention to die, versions A and B indicate death by a repetition showing his requests were granted. Thereupon the ballad ends. Andersen considered this 'O mother, mother mak my bed' to be a conclusion formula found with tragic endings (usually) of love affairs. This is one of few such in ballads since they "seldom get beyond the narrative climax" (Andersen 1985:272). By this is meant that many ballads stop with the murder and do not bring the story to any other form of closure.

- 37 Har kómu af tí búði
trý lík, tey vóru so prúði.
[There came from that
house,
three corpses so grand.]

- 38 Tað fyrsta var Ólav, tað annað
hans vív,
tað triðja hans móðir, hon læt
sítt lív.
[The first was Ólav, the
second his wife,
the third his mother, who
gave up life.]

- 39 Tað fyrsta var Ólav, tað annað
hans moy,
tað triðja hans móðir, af sorg
hon doyði.
[The first was Ólav, the
second his maid,
the third his mother who
died of sorrow.]

Here again we have a conclusion formula which might be compared to the English "He died in the night, she died on the morrow" (mentioned in Andersen 1985:273).

The foregoing discussion would appear to indicate that although "Clerk Colven" and "Ólavur Riddararós" have been judged to be similar and, indeed, in a comparison of motifs and structure appear to be so, a strict textual comparison shows this not to be the case. The question then arises as to which versions are, in fact, most similar to the Faroese and Scottish texts? To answer this, I now intend to look briefly at other Scandinavian versions in comparison to the Faroese version and to the problem of "George Collins" and the English texts alongside "Clerk Colvill".

In the case of the Faroese, both Ólason and Jonsson have looked to Norway although for different reasons (Ólason 1982:122; Jonsson 1992:89). For Jonsson, this is because he sees Norway as being the source of French *lais* translated into the indigenous language. Ólason, on the other hand, looks to textual comparisons. He gives five examples involving Faroese text A but giving the Norwegian counterpart in each case from a different version (Ólason 1982:116-120). It is also interesting that the Norwegian texts do have a slight indication of an attempt to deceive the young bride. Let us take the examples, however, for the sake of convenience, from the single version, Norwegian text A (Landstad, 1853) because it is the oldest, specifically Norwegian example and the variations between versions are not great. We should look mostly for echoes of language rather than ideas or motifs.

Faroese

Norwegian.

- 1 Olaf han reid ivir rjóde,
han vil til sit bryllaup bjóde.
[Olaf rode around
to invite people to his
wedding.]

Rather than the introduction of the dialogue with the mother, the Norwegian version immediately mentions that Olav's journey is to invite people to his wedding.

- 7 Olavur riður eftir björgunum fram,
fann uppá eitt elvar-rann.
[Olav rode along the cliffs,
came upon an elfin house.]

- 3 Olaf han reid seg nord ivir
røy,
sá reid han in i den elveleik
[Olaf rode north over land,
rode into an elfin dance.]

The Faroese hero rides along the rocks thinking of the elves whom he meets in the next stanza. The term 'leik' [elfin dance] is used later in the Faroese text (verses 32 and 34). The Norwegian, Olaf, rides north over the rocks and arrives at an elf dance.

11 Ver vælkomin, Ólavur Riddararós!
tú gakk í dansin of kvöð for os!
[Welcome, proud knight Olav,
join in the dance and sing for us.]

4 Höyre du Olaf Liljukrans,
stig af hesten og trod i dans.
[Listen Olaf Liljukrans,
get down from your horse
and join the dance.]

The Faroese hero is welcomed and asked to lead the dance. The Norwegian hero is asked to get down off his horse and join the dance.

14 Eg kann ikki meira hjá elvum bó,
í morgin lati eg mítt brullup snó.
[I can't stay with the elves any more,
I celebrate my wedding tomorrow.]

5 Aa dans med deg eg inki má,
imorgo skal mit bryllaup stá.
[I can't dance with you,
my wedding is tomorrow.]

The Faroese can not stay with the elves because he is to be married the next day. It is to be remembered again here that the Faroese texts are the only ones than specifically mention "more" or "any longer". The Norwegian Olaf will not dance – also because of his impending marriage. As mentioned already, there follow some Norwegian stanzas listing gifts (including a young daughter) offered to entice Olaf to join the dance.

16 Viltú ikki meira hjá elvum bó,
sjúkur skaltú títt brullup snó.
[If you won't stay with the elves
any more,
you will be ill when you celebrate
your wedding.]

12 Hokke vil du dá heller
med elvo bú,
hell' dú vil fara frá elvo sjúk?
[Would you rather stay
with the elves
or leave the elves with an
illness?]

17 Viltú ikki longur hjá elvum vera,
sjúkur skaltú títt brullup gera.
[If you won't stay with the elves
any more,
you will be ill when you get married.]

13 Hokke vil du dá heller med
elvo vera
hell' du vil sjúk dit gestebod
gera?
[Would you rather stay
with the elves,
or deliver your invitations
while ill?]

If the Faroese does not stay with the elves, he will be ill at his wedding. If the Norwegian does not stay with the elves, he will be ill when he leaves them and continues on his way to invite his guests. The very same rhyming words are used. Differing sections follow. The Faroese receives his death by poisoned drink while the Norwegian spurs on his horse, tries to evade elf fire, and receives the 'death blow' on the shoulders.

31 Olavur heim í garðin fór
úti hans móðir fyri honum stóð.

[Olav went home,
his mother was out in front
meet him.]

In each case, the traveller finds his mother waiting out in front of the home.

34 Tí eri eg fölin, tí eri eg bleik:
í gjár var eg í elvar-leik.
[I am so wan, I am so pale,
because yesterday I was in
the elfin dance.]

20 Og som han kom seg til
borgeled,
der stóð hans móder
kvilte seg ved.
[And when he came
home,
there stood his mother
waiting.]

24 Ded er 'ki undrast at eg ar
bleik,
fer eg heve vorid i elveleik.
[It is no wonder I am
pale,
because I have been in the
elfin dance.]

The Faroese Olav says he is pale because he was with the elves whereas the Norwegian Olaf says it is no wonder he is pale for the same reason. This also is one of only a very few stanzas where the Icelandic version A is verbally similar to the Faroese (20. So ertu blár og so ertu bleikur, sem þú hafir verid á álfaleik.) What follows in Norwegian is a number of requests including the request that his fiancée should not be told that he is dead, but rather that he has gone hunting. There is no equivalent in Faroese for Faroese is similar to the Scottish version concerning which aspects of the entire story are covered. The deaths are also recorded slightly differently.

36 Olavur vendist til vegginn brátt,
hann doyði langt fyri miðnátt.
[Olav soon turned to the wall,
he died long before midnight.]

29 Og dá som prestin
kom fer land,
dá gav han Olaf up si ánd.
[And when the priest had
arrived,
then Olaf gave up the
ghost.]

Where the Faroese simply turns to the wall and dies, the Norwegian's death is related to the arrival of the priest. Then we have the mention of the three corpses that are carried from the house.

37 Har kómu af tí búði
trý lík, tey vóru so prúði.
[There came from that house
three corpses so grand.]

38 Og innan dagin den vart ljós,
dá kom der tri lík af
brúdrehus.
[At the next day's dawn, there
came three corpses
from the bridal house.]

38 Tað fyrsta var Olav, tað annað hans vív,
tað triðja hans móðir, hon læt sítt lív.

[The first was Ólav, the second his wife
the third his mother, who gave up life.]

39 Den eine var Olaf, den andre
hans möy,
og sá hans móder af sorgi
laut döy.

[The first was Olaf, the
second his maid,
and then his mother who
died of sorrow.]

39 Tað fyrsta var Olav, tað annað hans moy,
tað triðja hans móðir, af sorg hon doyði.
[The first was Ólav, the second his maid,
the third his mother who died of sorrow.]

At this point, the Faroese ballad ends. The Norwegian ballad, however, continues with the tale of the deception of the bride. This is brief, telling her only (as Olaf had requested) that he has gone out hunting. She is not deceived and takes her own life.

This brief comparison of Faroese and Norwegian texts would seem to indicate that the Faroese and Norwegian texts have considerable common ground in terms of imagery and expression. This supports the findings of Jonsson and Ólason.

The search for a text comparable to "Clerk Colvill" in the Anglophone tradition is more complex than the search for Scandinavian texts comparable to the Faroese "Ólavur Riddararós". Child found no texts of "Clerk Colvill" in England. He did, however, collect a short ballad concerning Giles Collins who comes home to die. This is "Lady Alice", Child 85. In 1909, Dr. George B. Gardner collected a ballad in the New Forest, called "George Collins", which find he duly reported in the *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*. The text of this ballad is:

1. George Collins walked out one May morning,
Then may was all in bloom,
And there he beheld a fair pretty maid,
She was washing her marble stone.
2. She whooped, she holloed, she highered her voice,
And held up her lily-white hand,
"Come hither to me, George Collins," said she,
"And thy life shall not last thee long."
3. He put his foot to the broad water side,
And over the lea sprung he,
He embraced her around her middle so small,
And kissed her red, rosy cheeks.

4. George Collins rode home to his father's own gate,
And loudly did he ring,
* * * * *
* * * * *
5. "Arise, my dear father, and let me in,
Arise, my dear mother, and make my bed,
Arise, my dear sister, and get me a napkin,
A napkin to bind round my head.
6. For, if I should die this night,
As I suppose I shall,
You bury me under the marble stone,
That joins the fair Eleanor's hall."
7. Fair Eleanor sat in her room so fine,
A-working the silver twine,
She saw the fairest corpse a-coming
As ever the sun shone on.
8. She said to her servant maid,
"Whose corpse is this so fine?"
"This is George Collins' corpse a-coming,
And an old tru lovyer of thine."
9. "Come put him down, my six pretty lads,
And open his coffin so fine;
That I might kiss his lily-white lips,
For ten thousand times he has kissed mine."
10. Those news was carried to London town
And wrote on London gate,
That six pretty maidens died all of that night,
And all for George Collins' sake.

(text from Parker, 1952:61).

Miss Barbara M. Cra'ster immediately noticed the similarity of the second part of the ballad to "Giles Collins" / "Lady Alice" (Child 85), and observed that the first section also supplied motifs similar to "Clerk Colvill". From this, Miss Cra'ster deduced that the "George Collins" ballad might be a survival of the original ballad "from which both *Clerk Colvill* and *Giles Collins / Lady Alice* are descended" (Cra'ster's 1910 article in the *Journal of the Folk-Song Society* quoted in Parker 1952:61-2). Further confirmation of this theory came from the American Samuel P. Bayard who collected American versions of a ballad named "Johnny Collins" that appeared to be of some antiquity and of British origin (Bayard 1945). Since then, the "George Collins" - "Giles Collins" / "Lady Alice" reconstruction seems to have been accepted by many as an English version of "Elveskud". Bengt Jonsson has even noted

that the combination of Child 42 and "Lady Alice" (Child 85) would provide a three part tale and thus a step towards proving that, through Scotland, Norway (like some East-Nordic texts) also originally had a full text of the whole story (Jonsson, 1992:80).

One of the aspects of this now-orthodox acceptance of "George Collins" as a cognate of "Clerk Colvill" that bothered me was the lack of 'linguistic echo'. Just such an 'echo' exists between the Scandinavian versions of "Elveskud" (as shown above) despite the fact that they do indeed have differences in the story line. Since "George Collins" and "Clerk Colvill" are definitely linguistically related, they might have been expected to have more linguistic expressions in common. Atkinson (1999b) methodically and masterfully summarises the arguments in favour of the identification of "George Collins" with the Scottish "Clerk Colvill" and the supposed European counterparts. He then deals equally deftly with the various objections. Atkinson stresses the mention (which I had overlooked) in Nicolaisen that

"There is an undeniable onomastic similarity between George, Johnny or Giles Collins in versions of "Lady Alice" and Clerk *Colin* in "Clerk Colvill" (Child 42). But it should not be forgotten that May *Colvin*, *Colven*, *Colin* and *Collin* all appear as characters in versions of "Lady Isobel and the Elf Knight" (Child 4) and there is no suggestion of any genetic relationship between that ballad and "Clerk Colvill" (Child 42). (Nicolaisen, 1992:38).

Atkinson also suggests that any comparative study of the texts of "George Collins" and "Clerk Colvill":

needs to consider the ballads on at least three different levels: 1) a denotative or textual level which considers the art of storytelling in song, and also the variations that affect a particular narrative; 2) a metaphorical or figurative level of connotations shared among different texts which make up an important part of the 'grammar' of balladry; 3) a further level which comprises textual reception on the part of singers and listeners, and which draws on both the denotative and connotative levels as well as extratextual and performance factors to produce a 'reading' of the text. Thus at the denotative level it is not so easy to maintain that 'George Collins' and 'Clerk Colvill' tell the same story, while at the connotative level there is certainly some shared ground. The slender evidence available from singers and others suggests that 'George Collins' is understood as a distinct entity. Ultimately, though, the question of whether or not 'Clerk Colvill' and the Hampshire 'George Collins' are in some way genetically related seems unresolvable by comparative textual analysis. The evidence is incomplete, and at most the verdict must be one of 'not proven'. (Atkinson, 1999b:11)

Obviously the existence of an Anglophone text with more similarity to "Clerk Colvill" than the sharing of a few motifs, is difficult to affirm. This leaves the Scottish text with

the appearance of being a ballad 'orphan', and I can only speculate that it has come about from the fusion of a number of different motifs and influences. The influence of the Scandinavian versions, however, would appear to be somewhat less than has been generally accepted.⁴

NOTES

¹ For a fuller analysis of this possibility, see Fischer 1998.

² This similarity of the ballad to a part of Propp's model is interesting in view of Dundes' observation that the last part of the Odyssey is "strikingly similar" to Propp's functions 23-51 (Propp, 1968:xiv).

³ Cf. Niclasen, 1946-7.

⁴ Kuhn has also described the British-Scandinavian connection as being on the 'contact' level rather than on the 'textual' or 'product' level. (Kuhn, 1997:2)

CHAPTER 9

Young Beichan (Child 53A) and *Harra Pætur og Eliniborg* (CCF 158A)

The narrative outline of this ballad type is as follows: A man leaves a woman to whom he has made some promise of marriage. He asks her to wait a specific number of years before she decides he is not returning and marries elsewhere. The period elapses, the lady learns where her lover is and decides to travel to him. She arrives on the day he is scheduled to marry someone else. The lady is recognised and the new bride is spurned. The original couple then marry.

According to Child (1:459), the Nordic, Spanish and Italian versions "preserve a story essentially the same as that of "Young Beichan". Child also finds the differences between the Nordic versions, in their interpretation of the story, to be negligible (see Figure 9.1 for the distribution of related types). A direct comparison of the Scottish and Faroese versions, however, will make it clear that, although each does indeed follow the story outlined above, there are significant differences between them. In each case the 'A' texts are used.

Scottish

1. In London city was Bicham born,
He longd strange countries for to see,
But he was taen by a savage Moor,
Who handld him right cruely.

Faroese

1. Harra Pætur og Eliniborg,
børn vóru tey so ung,
løgdu sínum ástum saman,
mongum er forlag tung.
[Peter and Eliniborg, they
were such young children,
they fell in love with each
other,
many people have a tragic
fate.]
2. Harra Pætur og Eliniborg,
børn vóru tey so rík,
løgdu sínum ástum saman,
mongum er forlag slík.
[Peter and Eliniborg,
they were such rich children,
they fell in love with each
other,
such is the fate of many.]

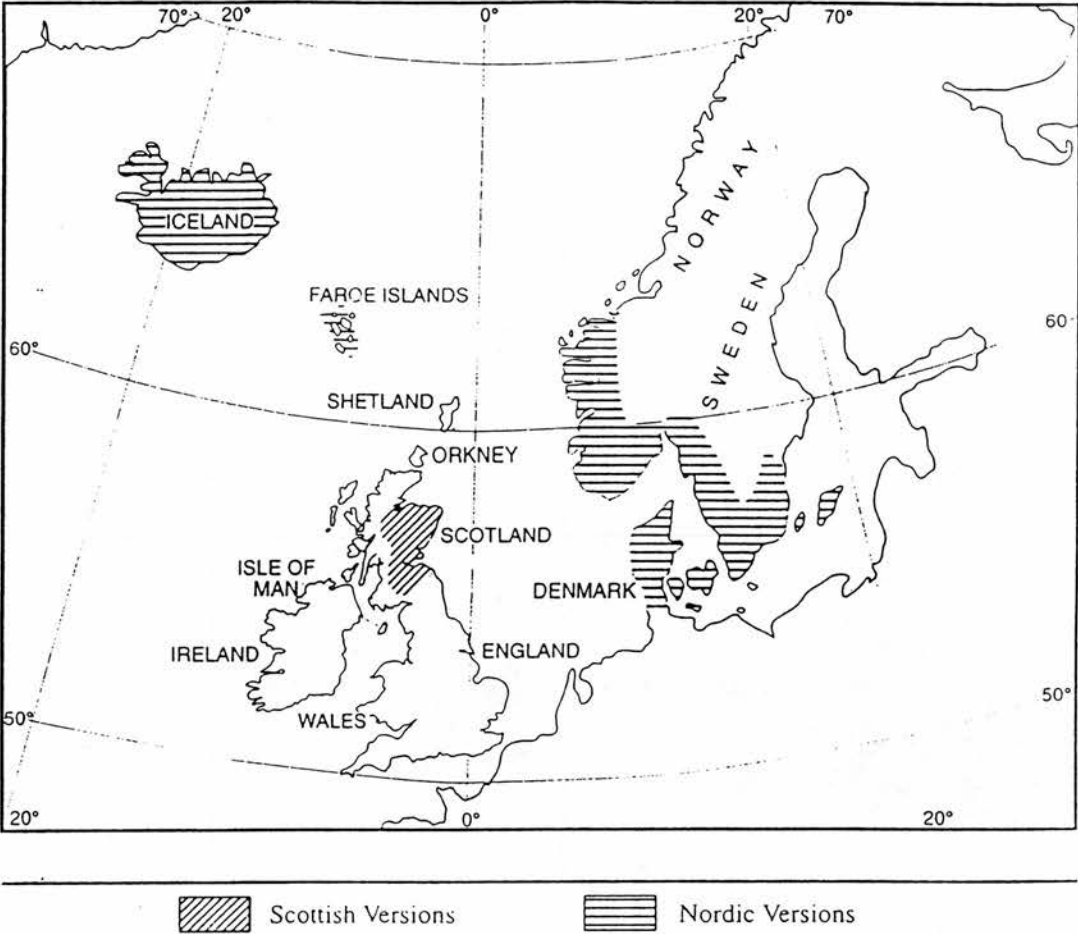


Figure 9.1 Distribution of Types analogous to "Young Beichan" (Child 53)

3. Legdi hann hendur á frúnnar
háls,
myntist við hana blíða:
"Leingi vilt tú, Eliniborg,
festarmoy mín blíða?"
[He put an arm round the
girl's neck,
kissed her gently,
"Will you wait a long time,
Eliniborg my promised
one ?"]
4. "Blíða vil eg í sjei vintur
uttan frænda ráð,
giftist ekki livandi manni,
meðan eg liva má.
"I will wait seven years
despite my relations' advice,
I will not marry any other
man,
as long as I shall live.
5. Blíða vil eg sjei vintur
móti mínum frænda vilja,
giftist ekki livandi manni,
um enn meg kongur giljar."
[I will wait seven years
against my relatives' wishes,
I shall not marry any other
man,
even if [the] king courts me."]
6. Harra Pætur stígur
í tann standandi floy:
"Eg forbjóði hvörjum manni
mína festarmoy."
[Peter stepped
onto that waiting vessel,
"I forbid any man whatever
[to touch] my betrothed."]
7. Harra Pætur stígur
í tann standandi stavn:
"Eg forbjóði hvörjum manni
[at] sova í hennara arm."
[Peter stepped
into the waiting bow:
"I forbid any man whatsoever
[to] sleep in her arms."]

In both instances, the main character is introduced. This is briefly done in the case of the Scottish text but the Faroese is extensive with many details of the social background of Peter and Eliniborg. The reason for Beichan's departure is made clear but none is given in the case of Peter. Much is made of Peter's request that Eliniborg should wait for him. She promises him seven years before ending their engagement. For his part, he forbids any other man to trifle with her. The major differences here is immediately obvious: Peter leaves his lady at home while Beichan will meet, and then leave, his lady overseas. It is interesting to note, however, that version 53H will employ a very similar verse concerning the time of separation when the characters part after Beichan's liberation:

It's seven lang years I'll mak a vow
And seven lang years I'll keep it true
If ye'll wed wi na ither woman,
It's I will wed na man but you. (17)

But let us to return to the main texts.

2. For thro his shoulder he put a bore,
An thro the bore has pitten a tree,
An he's gard him draw the carts o wine.
Where horse and oxen had wont to be.
3. He's casten [him] in a dungeon deep,
Where he could neither hear nor see;
He's shut him up in a prison strong,
An he's handld him right cruely.
4. O this Moor he had but ae daughter,
I wot her name was Shusy Pye;
She's doen her to the prison-house,
And she's calld Young Bicham one word by.
5. "O hae ye ony lands or rents,
Or citys in your ain country,
Could free you out of prison strong,
An coud mantain a lady free?"
6. "O London city is my own,
An other citys two or three,
Coud loose me out o prison strong,
An coud mantain a lady free.'

7. O she has bribed her father's men
Wi meikle goud and white money,
She's gotten the key o the prison doors,
An she has set Young Bicham free
8. She's gi'n him a loaf o good white bread,
But an a flask o Spanish wine,
An she bad him mind on the ladie's love
That sae kindly freed him out o pine.
9. "Go set your foot on good ship-board,
An haste you back to your ain country,
An before that seven years has an end,
Come back again, love, and marry me."

This shows the life of Beichan as a prisoner of a Moor in an un-named country. He draws the attention of Shusy Pye, the Moor's daughter, who, in this version, asks him quite unashamedly how rich he is. He claims to be wealthy which puts him on a par with Peter and Eliniborg in the Faroese text. After she has freed Beichan, Shusy Pye reminds him to return in seven years and marry her. This section brings out two clear differences between the texts. While the actual sojourn of Peter in Denmark may not be of his own free will (see below), the Faroese text has no section concerning the suffering of the male character in any imprisonment. The Faroese text, on the other hand, has a clear section in verses three to five where Peter asks his lady to wait and Eliniborg tells him how long she will do so. In "Young Beichan", however, there is no noted request and it is the lady who reminds her lover to return in seven years. We are thus left to assume that some promise or other has in fact been given.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. It was long or seven years had an end.
She longd fu sair her love to see;
She's set her foot on good ship-board,
An turnd her back on her ain country. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Sjey vintur forgangnir vóru,
Elini tók at leingja,
akslar yvir seg kápu blá
í glasglugga at standa.
[Seven years had passed,
Ellin began to yearn,
[and] with a blue cloak on her
shoulders, to stand at the
glass window.] |
|--|--|

Seven years have passed and both ladies feel it is time for action. Whereas Eliniborg stands thinking, Shusy Pye sets out immediately. This is possible because she has some knowledge of where to find Bicham. Eliniborg has little or no idea of where Peter is. The statement of how she wears her cloak is an indication that she has

nothing to hide. These interpretations of the Scandinavian 'formulas' and the idea that they perform some function in the 'narrative technique' are drawn from Holzapfel (1980).

9. Elin stendur í glasglugga,
sær hon út so víða,
fagur var tann knørrin,
hon sær eftir havinum líða
[Elin stands at the glass
window,
looks out so far,
fair was that ship, she sees
moving over the sea.]
10. "Fullvæl kenni eg seglini,
fullvæl kenni eg rá,
fullvæl kenni eg knørrin tann,
ið harra Pætur ár."
["Full well I know the sail,
full well I know the yardarm,
full well I know that boat,
Peter rows it."]
11. Elin gongur til strandar
oman,
sínnum borðum skeyt,
fagur var sá knørrin,
for bryggjuni fleyt.
[Elin goes down to the beach,
saw them land,
fair was that boat,
floating by the wharf.]
12. "Hoyrið tit, ríku keypmenn,
hvat hava tit at selja?"
"Vit hava skráður og skarlak
reyð,
tað besta frú kann velja."
["Listen, rich merchant,
what do you have to sell?"
"We have fine clothes and
scarlet red,
the best a lady could choose."]

13. "Lítid er mær um skríður,
og ei um skarlak reyða,
mín bróðir er av landi úti,
tí syrgi eg meg til deyða."
["I am not interested in the
fine clothes,
nor even in the scarlet red,
my brother is abroad, and
I am worried to death."]
14. "Han er ei tín bróðir,
hann er tín biðlasvein,
hann er sær í Danimark,
hann ræður for borgum ein.
[He is not your brother,
he is your suitor,
he is to be found in Denmark,
he is master of a castle.]
15. Hann er sær í Danimark,
teir kalla hann harra Pætur ríka,
hann hevur fest ta danske frú,
hon er ikki tygara líki."
[He is to be found in
Denmark,
they call him 'Rich Peter'
he is engaged to that Danish
woman, she is not your
equal."]

Eliniborg learns from a merchant (who arrives in a ship owned by Peder) that Peder is in Denmark where he is known as rich Sir Peder and that he is engaged to a Danish lady who is described as being "not like" Eliniborg. This is the first indication of a betrayal and there is nothing similar in the Scottish text. It is also interesting that Eliniborg immediately starts her series of actions by pretending that she is asking after her "brother". This is the first in a series of deceptions in contrast to the Scottish text which is more direct. The merchant, however, apparently knows of the true relationship and gives all the necessary information concerning Peder in Denmark. This is a Faroese oicotype; it differs from other Scandinavian versions (including the Icelandic) which describe Peder as being in Austria or some other eastern land (see below). The form of address to the merchant "You listen ..." (v. 12) should be taken as indicating that the speaker has something in mind rather than a simple commercial transaction (Holzapfel, 1980:85). There is something particular she wants – and this is borne out in the following stanzas.

16. Elin gongur frá strondum
niðan,
sveipar hon seg í skinn,
so gár hon í høgaloft
for Eirik, brøður sín, inn.
[Elin came up from the beach,
she wrapped herself in her
fur,
thus she went to the tower,
to see Eirik, her brother.]
17. "Væl *sitið tær*, Eirikur,
bróðir mín,
tað sigi eg tær av,
vilt tú vera mín stýrimaður
yvir tað salta hav?"
["May things go well with
you, Brother Eirik,
I am asking this of you,
will you be my helmsman
across the salt sea?"]
18. "Set teg nidur við mínum
borði,
drekk við mær í dag,
kalli tað ei vera moyggjasið
at sigla tað salta hav."
["Sit down at my table,
and drink with me today,
it is unsuitable for a maid
to sail the salty sea."]
19. Elin snúðist av hallini út,
mestan var hon vreið:
"Gud lati teg ikki liva tann dag,
eg biði teg bønir meiri."
[Elin turned and left the hall,
she was very angry:
"May God release you from
life
that day I ask you more
favours."]
20. Tekur hon allar moyarnar,
setir saman í ring,
hon tók upp ein silversaks,
hon klippir hár umkring.
[She gathers all the maidens,
seats them in a ring,
she took up silver scissors
she cuts hair all around.]

21. Tekur hon allar moyarnar,
 hon klippir av teim hár,
 síðan lærir hon allar tær
 tað jútska riddaramál.
 [She gathers all the maidens,
 she cuts off their hair,
 after that she teaches all of
 them
 the speech of Jutland
 knights.]
22. Tekur hon allar moyarnar,
 sker teim riddaraklæði,
 so ganga tær til strandar oman,
 sum Elin fyri er.
 [She gathers all the maidens,
 cuts them knightly clothes,
 then they go down to the
 beach,
 with Elin out in front.]
23. Eirikur gongur til strandar
 oman
 pá tann sama dag:
 "Eg vil vera tín stýrimaður
 yvir tað salta hav."
 [Eirik went down to the
 beach,
 that very same day:
 "I will be your helmsman
 over that salty sea."]
24. "Eg seti ikki minni við
 enn mín silvurring,
 eingin kemur kallmaður
 innan skipakring.
 ["I give as security no less
 than my silver ring,
 no man is to come
 into the ship area.]
25. Eg seti ikki minni við
 enn mítt silvurkross,
 eingin kemur kallmaður
 inn á skip til os.
 [I give as security no less
 than my silver cross
 no man is to come
 on board ship to us.]

26. Eg seti ekki minni við
enn mín silvurkorða,
eingin kemur kallmaður
innan snekkjunnar borða."
[I give as security no less
than my silver sword,
no man is to come
over the ship's gunwales."]

This section on Eliniborg's preparations for her journey has no counterpart in "Young Beichan". The fact that verse 16 says she wrapped herself in her fur and went into the tower should be interpreted as indicating that she is obscuring her real intentions (Holzapfel, 1980:86). In another article, Holzapfel notes that this is a frequently used formula in Scandinavian balladry and is contrasted with the action of throwing the cape (or fur) back over the shoulders so that nothing is concealed either mentally or physically. This is a way of revealing the 'personal attitudes' of a person by means of a physical indicator (Andersen et al., 1982:148). I have translated the greeting "væl *sitið tær*" (v. 17) as a friendly greeting. It is, however, more than that: it actually says "You sit well" but it indicates that what is to follow is important and that decisions are to be made (Holzapfel, 1980:86). After her brother refuses to captain a ship for her, Eliniborg continues the theme of dissembling. This time, however, she gathers her maids as her crew, cuts their hair, provides them with men's clothing and teaches them how to speak like young noblemen from Jutland. The constant references to things Danish are probably indicative of the Danish origin of this ballad text.

27. Enntá var tað Eliniborg,
dregur upp á seg glógva,
so gár hon til stýri at stá,
og ternurnar at rógva.
[Then it was that Eliniborg,
pulls on her gloves,
goes to stand at the helm,
and the maidens row.]

28. Rókust úti í myrkum havi
mánaðirnar tvá,
ongar vættrar fingur tær
til nökur lond at sjá.
[They drifted out in the dark
sea,
for two months,
no spirits helped them
to see any land.]

29. Rókust úti í myrkum havi
 mánaðirnar tríggar,
 ongar vættrar fingur tær
 til nakað land at síggja.
 [They drifted out in the dark
 sea,
 for three months,
 no spirits helped them
 spy another coast.]
30. Ongar vættrar fingur tær
 til nøkur lond at sjá,
 fyri tann høga boðaslóð,
 so fell tann bylgja blá.
 [No spirits helped them
 catch sight of the other land,
 before [which] that high
 water
 broke on a reef where blue
 waves tumbled.]
31. Svaraði frúgvín Eliniborg
 í fyrsta orði tá:
 "Lovið heldur olmu
 so fáa vit land at sjá!"
 [The lady Eliniborg then
 spoke
 these first words:
 "Let us rather promise alms
 so that we may see land."]
32. Summar lovaðu eina,
 Elin lovaði tvá,
 tá tók tokan at lýsa av,
 tær fingur land at sjá.
 [Some promised one,
 Elin promised two,
 then the mist began to lighten,
 helped them to see land.]
33. Allar lovaðu eina og tvær,
 Elin lovaði trinnar,
 tokan tók so at lýsa av
 tær fingur land at kenna.
 [Everyone promised one and
 double, Elin offered three,
 the mist lifted enough
 helped them to recognise
 land.]

34. Arla var um morgunin,
sólin roðar í fjøll,
tá tók tokan at lýsa av
for harra Pæturs høll.
[It was early in the morning,
the sun reddened the hill,
then the mist began to lift
from Peter's hall.]
35. Fríggjadagin í páskaviku
fóru tær út í hav,
tær komu ikki til landanna
fyr enn sankta Mortans dag.
[Friday of Easter week
they set out to sea,
they did not reach land
until St. Martin's Day.]
36. Kasta sínum akkerum
á tann hvíta sand,
fyrst stígur frúgvín Eliniborg
sínum fótum á land.
[They put down their anchor
in that white sand,
Lady Eliniborg was first
to set foot on land.]

Here we have more details of the voyage which lasted from Easter to Martinmas (November 11th). The ladies of the crew promise to offer alms for divine assistance to help them through the mists and darkness. Verse 36 is a very general arrival formula and the mention of Eliniborg as the first to step ashore confirms her pre-eminent role.

11. She's saild up, so has she down,
Till she came to the other side;
She's landed at Young Bicham's gates,
An I hop this day she sal be his bride.
37. Uti í miðjum grasgarði
akslar hon sítt skinn,
og so búgvín gongur hon
tær høgu hallir inn.
[In the centre of the grassed
enclosure,
she shoulders her fur cape,
and thus ready she went
into their high hall.]

The description of Shusy Pye's journey is exceptionally brief and is combined with her happy approach to Bicham's door. Her hopes, however, are to be somewhat shattered in the following verses. Eliniborg, on the other hand, braces herself for the coming confrontation. She is actually the more fortunate of the two ladies because her

hero is not actually in the throes of marrying somebody else. The fact that she shoulders her fur indicates that she has nothing to hide – any weapon she carried would be immediately obvious – and she thus conformed to correct protocol.

12. "Is this Young Bicham's gates?" says she,
 'Or is that noble prince within?'
 'He's up the stairs wi his bonny bride,
 An monny a lord and lady wi him.

13. "O he has taen a bonny bride,
 An has he clean forgotten me!"
 An sighing said that gay lady,
 I wish I were in my ain country!

14. But she's pitten her han in her pocket,
 An gin the porter guineas three;
 Says, Take ye that, ye proud porter,
 An bid the bridegroom speak to me.

15. O whan the porter came up the stair,
 He's fa'n low down upon his knee:
 'Won up, won up, ye proud porter,
 An what makes a' this courtesy?'

16. 'O I've been porter at your gates,
 This mair nor seven years an three,
 But there is a lady at them now
 The like of whom I never did see.

17. 'For on every finger she has a ring,
 An on the mid-finger she has three,
 An there's as meikle goud aboon her brow
 As woud buy an earldome o lan to me.'

18. Then up it started Young Bicham,
 An sware so loud by Our Lady,
 'It can be nane but Shusy Pye,
 That has come oer the sea to me.'

Shusy Pye is not able to approach Young Bicham directly (as Eliniborg approached her recalcitrant hero) but is obliged to send a messenger upstairs to announce her arrival. The message has the desired effect and brings Young Bicham's prompt appearance.

42. Meðan eg fylgi mínum
systursoni tríggar dagar á leið,
komi eg ekki aftur tann fjórða,
so vænta meg ekki meir."
[While I go three days on the
way
with my sister's son,
if I don't return after the
fourth,
do not expect to see me
anymore."]
43. Svaraði frúgvín Ingibjörg,
tár á kinnar lá:
"Hann er ei tinn systurson,
fullvæl kann eg það sjá."
[Ingibjörg replied,
a tear lies on her cheek:
"He is not your sister's son,
I can clearly see that."]
44. Svaraði frúgvín Ingibjörg
tár á kinnar glíggjar:
"Hann er ei tinn systurson,
so væl kann eg það síggja."
[Ingibjörg replied,
a tear begins to shine on her
cheek, "He is not your sister's
son, I can see that very well.]
45. Svaraði frúgvín Ingibjörg,
í triðja orði tá:
"Kallmanna hefur hon
yvirbrøgd,
men kvennu hefur hon hár."
[Ingibjörg replied
a third time thus:
"She has the look of a man,
but the hair of a woman."]

Peder starts his disengagement from the Danish Ingibjörg. He claims a desire to spend three days with his 'nephew', but says Ingibjörg is to forget him if he does not then return. Ingibjörg weeps for she sees that Elinborg is clearly female. The mention of "hair" throughout the ballad is an indication of the essentially feminine nature of the travellers even though they are in disguise.

22. "Take back your daughter, madam,"
he says,
"An a double dowry I'll gi her wi;
For I maun marry my first true love,
That's done and suffered so much for me."
23. He's taen his bonny love by the han,
And led her to yon fountain stane;
He's changed her name frae Shusy Pye,
An he's cald her his bonny love,
Lady Jane.
46. Fylgdust tey til strandar
oman,
alt í einum liði,
harra Pætur og Eliniborg
og Ingibjörg tann triðja.
[They went down to the
beach
together, all in one group,
Peter and Eliniborg and
Ingibjörg made the third.]
47. Ingibjörg stendur á hvítum sandi,
sára ið hon grætur,
Elin stendur í fremra stavni,
hirðir ei, hvat hon letur.
[Ingibjörg stands on the
white sand, crying sorely.
Elin stands in the front of the
bow,
ignoring the noise.]
48. Liv nú væl, frú Ingibjörg,
tú hitt danske sprund,
eg havi nú fingið mín festarmann,
eg lænti tær um stund!
["Farewell now, Ingibjörg,
you Danish woman,
I have gained my fiancé now,
I lent him to you for a while!]
49. Liv nú væl, frú Ingibjörg,
við títt elvargeingi,
eg havi nú fingið mín festarmann,
eg lænti tær so leingi!"
[Goodbye, now, Ingibjörg,
with your elfin ways,
I have regained my betrothed,
that I lent you for so long!]
50. Grátandi snúðist frú Ingibjörg
aftur í sína borg,
gláður siglir harra Pætur
heim við Eliniborg.
[Crying, Lady Ingibjörg
turned back to her castle,
happily Peter sailed
home with Eliniborg.]

51. Drukkið varð teirra brúðleypið,
 kátt var teirra lív,
 gingu bæði í eina song,
 harra Pætur og hans vív.
 [Their wedding was
 celebrated,
 they lived happily together,
 went both in one bed,
 Peter and his wife.]
52. Farið fyr eystan, farið fyr
 vestan,
 farið fyr verðsins enda,
 tey koma bæði í eina song,
 ið Guð vil saman senda!
 [Travel eastward, travel west,
 travel to the world's end,
 they both end up in one bed,
 whom God wills together!]

Bicham politely returns his second fiancée to her mother and marries Shusy Pye. Eliniborg and Peder sail off to marry. It is Eliniborg, however, who bluntly accuses the Danish Ingibjörg of having bewitched Peder and informs her that she, Ingibjörg, is now the abandoned one. There is a definite contrast here between the characters of the travelling ladies. Verses 51, 52 are standard closing formulae.

In fact, it would appear that apart from the general theme of a lady deciding that she is still intent on marrying a man who has 'forgotten' to return at the end of a specified period and who successfully goes in search of him, the ballads have little in common. The stories are told in a differing manner: the Scottish tale unfolds with neither deception nor disguise – both of which are integral to the Scandinavian renditions. Again, although as a direct result of the differing traditions, the Scandinavian ballads are much longer than the Scottish and the Faroese texts are the longest of all. This length gives opportunity for greater quantities of description. Nor are the narratives exactly parallel. The Scandinavian texts have no equivalent for the imprisonment of Young Bicham at the hands of the Saracen, his mistreatment and eventual release through the actions of the captor's daughter. The only suggestion of a parallel is the final taunt in CCF 158A:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>49. "Liv nú væl, frú Ingibjörg,
 við títt elvargeingi,
 eg hav nú fingið mín festarmann,
 eg lænti tær so leingi."</p> | <p>[Goodbye, now, Ingibjörg,
 with your elfin ways,
 I have regained my betrothed,
 that I lent you for so long.]</p> |
|---|---|

which would indicate the knight had been held captive by supernatural power. There is a contrast here with Peter being subjected to a 'magical' prison whereas Young Bicham was incarcerated in a physical one.

Supernatural power, in religious terms, is invoked for guidance in the Faroese text but is missing in most of the Scottish texts. The exceptions to this lack of divine guidance are provided by versions 53C and 53M. 53C tells us of a supernatural warning and assistance:

14. O it fell once upon a day
Burd Isbel fell asleep,
An up starts the Belly Blin,
An stood at her bed-feet.
15. "O waken, waken Burd Isbel,
How [can] you sleep so soun,
Whan this Bekie's wedding day,
An the marriage gain on?"
19. "Ye set your milk-white foot aboard,
Cry, Hail ye, Domine!
An I shal be the steerer o't,
To row you oer the sea."

53M, from the Peter Buchan manuscripts is at 54 stanzas, the longest.¹ In this instance, the heroine (Dame Essels) is advised by a supernatural being that the next day is to be Young Beichan's wedding day. She takes ship with God as her pilot. When she confronts her wayward hero, she addresses him in terms most reminiscent of the Scandinavian texts:

44. "Is this the way ye keep your vows
That ye will make to me?".....

This Buchan text, however, carries none of the particular markers of the Faroese text such as the request that the girl should wait for him, the disguise of the heroine's maids, the long voyage and the subterfuge necessary to extract the hero from the power that appeared to have enchanted him.

Versions 53E and 53N also involve the use of a divided ring as proof of identity. This point will be mentioned again in the second section below.

The differences between the two traditions were noted as the ballads were placed side by side and have been summarised here to emphasise the point. If the ballads are so different, perhaps we should seek to find their closest 'relatives', for such

relationships should indicate what contacts have been made. This search will be conducted in two sections, the first concerned with the Faroese ballad and the second with the Scottish one.

THE FAROESE BALLAD'S CONNECTIONS

Grundtvig praised this ballad type as "*ypperlig*" [excellent] and noted:

The legend form is in all recorded versions essentially the same, and even the unpublished versions conform in the main extremely closely, not only in the old and new Danish but also in the Norwegian and no less in the Swedish. In individual instances, there can be detected a particular agreement between the Icelandic and Faroese versions:.. (DgF 4:238)

[Sagnformen er i all Opskiftten væsenlig den sammes, og selv Udtrykket er i det hele taget særdeles fest, ikke alene i de gamle og nye danske, men ogsaa i den norsk og mindst i den svenske Opskrift. I enkelte Tilfælde kan der spores en særlig Overensstemmelse mellem den Islanske og den færøske Form:..]

This last comment has, apparently to do with whether the ballad was originally East- or West-Nordic. Grundtvig had little doubt: "It is probable that the Danish tradition stands closest to the source and that it was originally a *Danish* ballad that spread out over the whole Northland." (DgF 4:238) [Det bliver herved sandsynligst, at den gamle danske Tradition staar Kilden nærmest, og at der er en oprindelig *dansk* Vise, der har spredt over hele Norden.]

Indeed the versions are so close that Ólason complains "the variants are everywhere so closely related that it is difficult to find enough significant differences to classify them." (Ólason, 1982:356). To prove this point, Ólason takes stanzas 1, 2 and 5 in the Icelandic A version and shows how these have very close parallels in the Danish version A-1, the Norwegian A-1 and Danish A-3, and (in the case of the Icelandic stanza 5) in the Faroese version B-4. Let us, for the sake of example, look at those stanzas in the different traditions that correspond to the Faroese stanza 4. This is the reply given by the lady when faced with the question of how long she would wait for Peter.

Norwegian

Eg skall biðe deg i átte ár
endá i árinne nie,
höyre du herre Per i Riki
lenger will eg 'ki biðe. (1)
(Landstad, 1968:596)

[I'll wait 8 years for you
and not a year longer,
listen Per from Riki
I won't wait longer.]

- Faroese CCF 158B "Biðað vil eg í níggju ár [9 years]
við mína frænda ráð,
gifti meg ongum livandi manni
um mín kongur bað." (4)
- Icelandic ÍFkv 71A En þó eg bíði vm níu vinturr [9 years]
að minna frænda raði
eg gifti mig öngum lifandi manni
þó kongurinn sjálfur mín bæði. (5)
- Danish DgF 218A I aate aar vil ieg eder bide, [8 years]
alt med min frendes raad:
ieg vil mig iche mane-giffue
det kongen mig selffuer bad. (4)

The Faroese, Icelandic and Danish verses all say exactly the same thing (with the exception of the number of years). I have given only the Scandinavian texts because I think it worth while to observe the similarity of the actual words without the distraction of a translation. The Norwegian text is slightly different.

Ólason (1982:356) addresses himself also to the question of the names used in the different countries. All versions have the main male character named in the local linguistic form of Peter, seemingly without exception. The heroine on the mission of retrieval is generally named Ellensborg in Denmark; Ellin(i)borg (Ellin) in the Faroes; Ellen in the Swedish, in one Icelandic version and in some later Danish versions; and Kristín / Kjersti only in one Icelandic version and in the two Norwegian texts. Ólason is intrigued with the fact that, with only two Icelandic version, there is a division in the naming of the heroine. She is Ellen in ÍFkv 71A (as in the Faroes and in Denmark) and Kristín in the one surviving stanza of 71B (as also in the Norwegian versions). This he attributes to the fact that two different versions of the ballad came to Iceland quite independently. On the other hand, the name of the heroine's rival is so diverse as to suggest to Ólason that she was originally anonymous and was locally named at a much later date.

As far as naming is concerned, there is also the question of origins and destinations. None of the three versions of the Faroese ballad gives a name to the homeland of Pætur and Elliniborg. Pætur gives neither a reason for leaving nor a destination, although he is later found in Denmark. This is somewhat similar to the Swedish version (published as DgF 218K) except that Peder is found "*emellan sju konnunga-riken*" [in the midst of seven kingdoms]. Iceland's Pètur lives in Sweden and plans to journey to Jerusalem to atone for his sins. Instead, he manages to compound them in "*austriki*" [eastern kingdom], often interpreted as Austria since this is more clearly spelled out in other versions. Denmark's Peder is also bound for

Jerusalem – as expressed in the famous version from the Karen Brahe Folio (DgF 218D).

Tha kaam hanom y hoffuee
thend lange Ørsel-faar.

[He got the idea
of the long journey to Jerusalem.]

Other, later versions, however, are more similar to the Faroese in that they give no destination; the "eastern kingdom" or Austria is, however, where the heroine finds her errant knight. Some versions do, indeed, mention the home base as Denmark, but do so only in the last verse.

The whole question of the nature of the association between all the differing versions is complicated by the fact that :

[the Icelandic A version and the early Danish versions are] older than the others, and better preserved, they show several parallels with each other not found elsewhere. These two versions are, for the most part, paralleled by the Faroese version which is sometimes verbally closer to the Danish version, sometimes to the Icelandic one. (Ólason, 1982:359)

In addition, the close connections between Iceland and the Faroes in terms of this ballad are again much Ólason's concern (Ólason, 1982:358). He compares the two stanzas in the two traditions that concern the conversation between the merchant and the heroine.

Faroese (158A)

Icelandic (71A)

- 12 "Hoyrið tit, ríku keypmenn,
hvat hava tit at selja?"
"Vit hava skríður, og skarlak reyð,
tað besta frú kann velja."
- 13 "Lítið er mær um skríður,
og ei um skarlak reyða,
mín bróðir er av landi úti,
tí syrgi eg meg til deyða."

- 11 "Heilir og sælir, kaupmenn,
hvað havið þér að selja?"
"Skrúða, lin og skarlat,
hvað sem frú vill velja."
- 12 "Eg hirði ei um þann skríða
eða yðar skarlat rauða,
minn systerrson af landi er
sigldur,
það aflar mér nauða."

and a further stanza concerning the heroine's preparations:

- 20 Tekur hon allar moyrnar,
setir saman í ring,
hon tók upp ein silvursax,
hon klippur hár umkring.

- 19 Allur sínur þernur strax
setti hún saman í hring
tók ser svo eitt silfrsax
og skar þeirra hár í kríng.

Even without the assistance of translation, the similarity is evident. Another interesting feature connecting the two traditions is the use in the above stanzas of the words *skrúði* and *skarlat*. Ólason feels that these are "on account of the alliteration,² likely to be a secondary West-Nordic feature and therefore an indication of a special connection between the Icelandic and Faroese versions." (Ólason, 1982:359)

I started this section with a note about Grundtvig's conviction that this ballad was of Danish (thus East-Nordic) origin. In the Icelandic and Norwegian texts, however, more than half of the rhymes are in the feminine form³ whereas in the Danish and Faroese versions fewer than half of the rhymes fit this pattern (Ólason, 1982:360). But the Danish and Faroese proportion of feminine rhymes is still "unusually high". Gun Widmark has pointed out that feminine rhymes in quatrains is a characteristic West-Nordic feature mainly found in the East-Nordic area in heroic ballads brought from the west. (Widmark, 1970). Against this, Ólason sets the judgement of such West-Nordic specialists as Ernst von der Recke who shared Grundtvig's opinion on the ballad's Danish origins. Ólason's proposed answer to this conundrum is to suggest that it was "composed in Danish in Norway under the influence of West-Nordic balladry. This would have to have taken place after the Danish aristocracy had gained a foothold in Norway and the Danish language had started to replace Norwegian as the official language of the country." (Ólason, 1982:360) From there it could easily have spread to Iceland and the Faroes but apparently not from there to Shetland (that we can trace) nor to other areas of Scotland – although a closer examination of north-east ballads and possible connections to Denmark remains to be made.

THE CONNECTIONS OF THE SCOTTISH BALLAD

Child points out the association of this ballad with the legend associated with the life of Gilbert Beket, father of St. Thomas, and preserved in a manuscript of about 1300 (Child, 1:458). He goes on to consider some of the better-known historical facts that would belie the notion of direct descent but does admit that it is likely the ballad has been *affected* by the legend. He then proceeds to point out numerous other European ballads that have had a similar outline. Given the tremendous influence of the Crusades to the Holy Land, it is not surprising that there should be a number of such tales involving dalliances in the Near-East.

A ballad that shares a number of motifs with "Young Beichan" is "Hind Horn" (Child 17).⁴ Again we have a history of descent from an early ancestor; in this case a

geste "King Horn" in a manuscript from the late 12th century (Child, 1:188). This provides a cultural context very similar to "Young Beichan" and again there is a similar wide distribution of European analogues. We have the same framework of parted lovers being re-united at the point where one is in the throes of being married to somebody else. The role structure of "Hind Horn" however, is a reversal of "Young Beichan" for it is the lady who is to be married. After a prolonged absence, the hero arrives during the wedding forced on the heroine by her father, the king, and a 'last minute' rescue is effected. The distinguishing feature of "Hind Horn", however, is the role of the 'ring motif', which dates back to the "Odyssey" if not beyond. In "Young Beichan" version E (as was mentioned above), the ring was halved to provide proof of identity as well as a symbol of re-unification. In "Hind Horn", the ring is not broken but has, instead, supernatural powers that will cause it to indicate the state or condition of the giver to the recipient.

17A She's gien to him a diamond ring,
With seven bright diamonds set therein. (4)

"When this ring grows pale and wan,
You may know by it my love is gane." (5)

In due course, this happens and the lover hurries home from sea.

17B He's left the seas and he's come to land,
And there he meets with an auld beggar man. (7)

"What news, what news, thou auld beggar man,
For its seven years sin I've seen lan." (8)

"No news," said the old beggar man, "at all,
But there is a wedding in the king's hall." (9)

Horn exchanges clothes with the beggar and proceeds to the castle – much in the way that Eliniborg came to Pætur in her guise of a Jutland knight. Horn's approach is, however, much more circumspect.

When he came to the king's gate,
He asked a drink for Young Hind Horn's sake. (13)

This request is brought to the bride who rushes to oblige a mention of her lover's name. In contrast to this, most versions of "Young Beichan" require Susy Pye to bribe the porter with three pieces of gold or some similar payment in order to be able to meet

Beichan face to face. (There are, however, also a significant number of verses where the porter is simply asked to carry a message – usually concerning the bread and wine given him at the time of his liberation. There is also 53E where she hands the porter her part of the divided ring.) Hind Horn is served his drink and returns the container with the ring in it. The ring is recognised and Horn is questioned:

17A "O got ye this by sea or land?
Or got ye this off a dead man's hand?" (18)

"I got not it by sea, I got it by land,
And I got it madam, out of your own hand." (19)

the situation is thus resolved and Horn claims the bride.

17C Her ain bridegroom had her first to wed,
But Young Hind Horn had her first to bed. (24)

None of the Child versions has the equivalent of Young Beichan's paying off the new bride and returning her to her family. The situation of two weddings in one day is, however, related in a number of concluding verses of "Young Beichan":

53M Bondwell was married at morning ear,
John in the afternoon;
Dame Essels is a lady ower a' the bowers
And the high towers o Linne. (54)

53H "Fy! gar a' our cooks mak ready,
And fy! gar a' our pipers play,
And fy! gar trumpets gae thro the toun,
That Lord Beichan's wedded twice in a day!" (47)

Child notes two Danish ballads as being analogues to "Hind Horn". These are "Unge Hr. Tor og Jomfru Tore (DgF 72) and "Lovmand og Tord" (DgF 387).⁵ TSB classes these two ballads slightly differently – no. 72 as D47 and no. 387 as D45 although both are described by identical headlines "Knight comes just in time to rescue his beloved from a forced marriage."⁶

Both ballads have a similar tale; parted lovers agree to meet again after a certain number of years (generally 8 or 9). DgF 387 is spread much more widely in Scandinavia (in Norway, Sweden and Denmark, but not in the Faroes) while DgF 72 is found only in Denmark. According to TSB 45, at the end of the appropriate time, the lady's brothers marry her off to Lord Tord. After the marriage, the bride refuses to

retire to the marriage bed. When Lovmand's ship is sighted, the bride sends her brother to the beach to inform Lovmand of the situation. He rushes to the house and (in most versions) locks himself in with the bride – which gives another instance of 'first to wed and first to bed'. In no case, however, is any disguise employed. Lovmand regains his love and an accommodation is made whereby Lovmand's sister become the wife of Tord. Prior subtitled his translation of this ballad as "The Exchange of Brides (Prior, 1860, 2:441).

DgF72, "Unge herr Tor og jomfru Tore" is found only in Denmark and is noted in many of the old ballad books of the aristocracy. DgF 72A (from Karen Brahe's Folio) provides us with a verse with a distinct echo of the promises to wait in the Scandinavian ballad type that includes the Faroese "Harra Pætur og Eliniborg".

<i>Op vnder ø</i>	<i>[across the land</i>
"huor lenge well y meg bide møø?"	"how long will you
	remain my maiden?"
"Waar thett foruden min frenders wrede:	"Withal besides my
	friends' advice
jeg wilde eder bide y wienther IX." (4)	I will wait 9 years."]

In this case the story is similar to the other up to the point when the hero is met by the bride's brother on the beach. At this point hr. Tor reveals himself to the bride through his harp playing and a conversation during a game of chess during which they plan their escape. They flee in a ship which is subjected to storms conjured up by the practice of black magic by the bride's mother. Only the bride with a virginal gold crown on her head can bring the boat safely to land. Version 72D (published prior to 1719) puts the final outcome in charming terms:

Hand tog Iomfru Torre i sin Arm	[He took the Lady Torre in his
	arms,
hand gav hende Guldkrone og Dronnings navn. (131)	He gave her a gold crown and the title of queen.]

In this way, we have made a circle of ballads concerning themselves with parted lovers and last minute rescues. Continental Scandinavia is within this loop of constant cross-fertilisation of plots and motifs. Although there are differences within the Nordic corpus it is obvious that the Faroese version is closely allied with many other West-Nordic ballad versions and also with some that show signs of belonging to the East-Nordic types. Yet the Faroe Islands also lie at some remove from mainland Scandinavia and not all Nordic ballads are represented there. "Young Beichan"

contains many motifs that are to be found in a number of other Scottish ballads and perhaps most especially in "Hind Horn". "Hind Horn", in turn, has some similarities to the Danish Ballads "Unge Hr. Tor og Jomfru Tore" and "Lovmand og Tore" but these are among those ballads not found in the Faroe Islands.

NOTES

¹ Child notes that this was probably a broadside but considers that it did indeed preserve an ancient traditional feature of the supernatural.

² What is left unsaid here is that alliteration was a feature of Old Norse skaldic poetry.

³ I am not able to comment on these patterns in the Scandinavian languages.

⁴ The ballads are closely linked by Child. The headnotes to the Danish analogues, however, are in volume 2 of DgF and lack the informative essay material that was so often provided in later volumes where Axel Olrik was the editor.

⁵ Prior notes that he judges that both of these ballads have their origins in the English "Geste of King Horn" (Prior, 1860, 2:441, 3:150). In this context, Prior quotes from this geste a verse that certainly sounds familiar:

"At the sevá yeres ende
Yef y no come ne sende,
Tac thou hosebonde."

(Prior, 1860, 3:158).

[At the end of seven years
If I neither come nor send,
Marry a husband.]

⁶ TSB also indicates that neither ballad is known in the Faroe Islands.

CHAPTER 10

Lord Thomas and Fair Annet (Child 73B) and Harra Pætur og Kirstin (CCF 159)

The common theme of these two ballads is that only disaster can follow when a man abandons a much-loved woman, who is his wife in everything but name, in order to marry someone who is more wealthy. In each case, the end result is that all three lie dead as victims of murder or suicide. Another interesting thing they have in common is the fact that they both have made appearances as popular broadside ballads.

In the case of "Lord Thomas and Fair Annet", this was an English version published as a broadside in the time of Charles II and republished with alterations in Percy's *Reliques* (Child:180). Andersen (Andersen et al., 1982:39), tells us in greater detail that the full title of the broadside as preserved in the Pepys Collection was "A Tragical Story of Lord Thomas and Fair Ellinor. Together with the Downfall of the Brown Girl. To a Pleasant New Tune, called Lord Thomas". This, as Andersen points out, is "an appetizing title giving a brief outline of the story and including a reference to the beauty and novelty of the tune". Andersen (42-3) also points out that there is difficulty in dating this version as the register of titles kept by the Company of Stationers of London (which had a printing monopoly) do not show this ballad as listed between the years 1557-1709. Andersen comes to the conclusion that :

The manner of narrative presentation, revealed in a structural analysis, is strikingly similar for the texts / songs we usually term oral traditional ballads and some of the ballads appearing on broadsides, especially if these are of unknown, "popular" origin, as the present version of "Lord Thomas and Fair Ellinor". (Andersen et al., 1982:47)

This is contrasted with another broadside treatment of the same ballad (c. 1676) from the Roxburghe Collection where it is a moralizing piece presented in a non-ballad manner (Andersen et al., 1982:53). In terms of the Scottish versions of the ballad, the closest Child presentation to the Pepys Collection broadside ballad is 73B from the Kinloch manuscript. This ballad has apparently always been a favourite and still remains so as Bronson (1969:168) rates Child 73 as being the second most popular ballad in Britain behind the ubiquitous "Barbara Allan". In both cases, Bronson appears to consider that an easily remembered story-line helps such a rating.

Figure 10.1 shows a distribution of analogues according to one particular action motif.

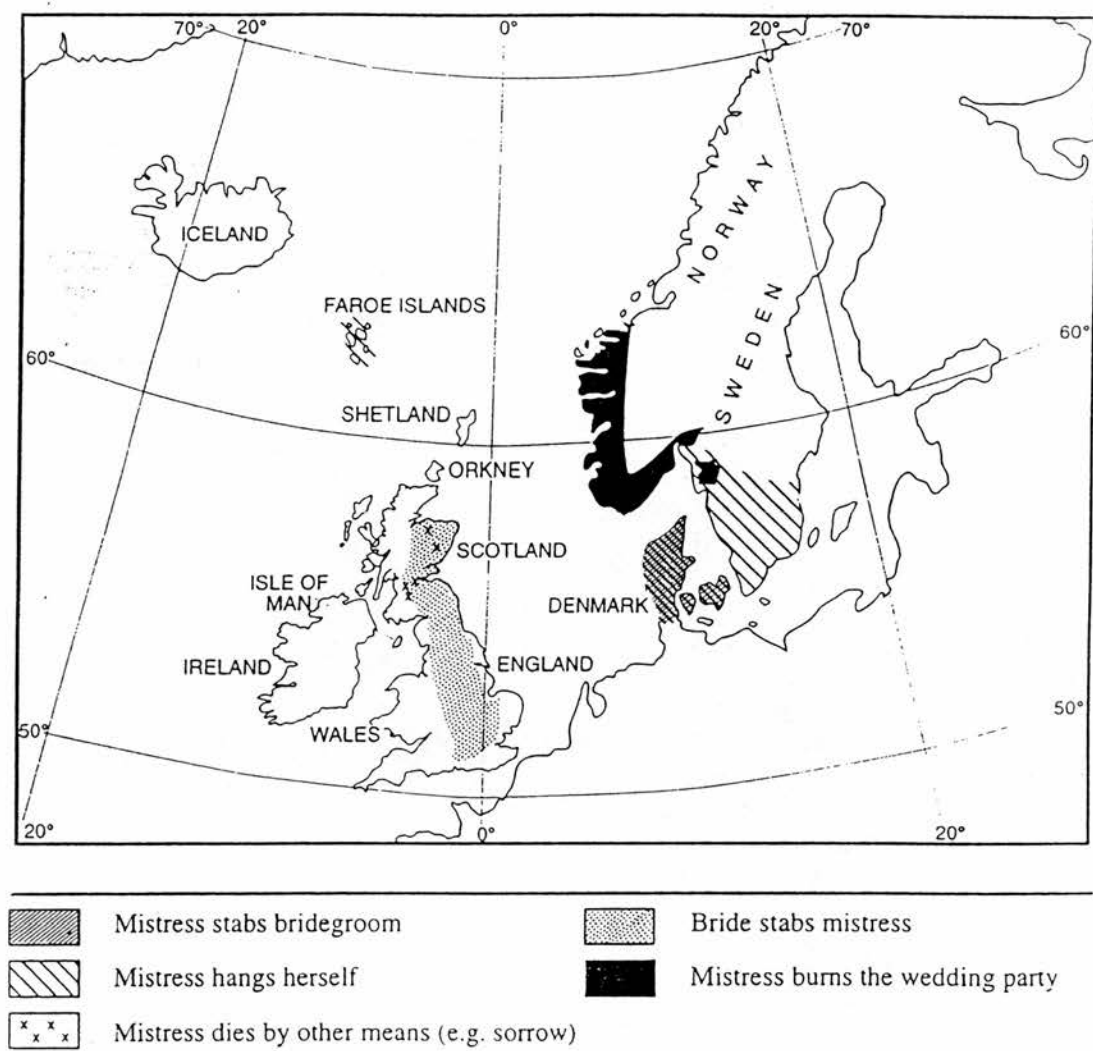


Figure 10.1 Distribution by Motif of Types analogous to "Lord Thomas and Fair Annet" (Child 73)

The Nordic analogues appear to have followed a similar path as Grundtvig notes that the Danish version 210B had appeared as a broadside in the 17th century. Both ballads begin with a scene of peaceful interaction with no hint of what is to come.

Scottish

Faroese

1 Sweet William and Fair Annie

Sat a' day on yon hill;
Though they had sat til the leventh o'
June,
They wad na got their fill.

1 Harra Pætur og lítin Kirstin tey sótu

yvir borð,
– *undir hvítan saðil* –
tey snakkadu so mangt eitt gamans orð.
– *Der mín gangar i rennur gjøgnum skógin*
[Peter and young Kirstin
sat at table,
– *under a white saddle*,
they spoke so many a pleasant
word.
– *there my horse runs through the wood.*]

Disunity, however soon appears in the Scottish text when Willie declares his intention of marrying for money. He then proceeds to visit the various members of his family in order to get support for this notion. His father and mother are in agreement but his sister begs him to marry Fair Annie for the sake of love.

2 But Willie spak a word amiss.

Fair Annie took it ill:
"I'll neer marry a tocherless lass
Agen my ain friends' will."

3 Then on she lap, and awa she gat,

As fast as she could hie:
"Fare ye weel now, Sweet Willie,
It's fare ye weel a wee."

4 Then he is gane to his father's ha,

And tirl'd at the pin;
Then up and rase his father proud,
And loot Sweet Willie in.

5 "Come riddle us, riddle us, father dear,

Yea both of us into ane;
Whether sall I marry Fair Annie,
Or bring the brown bride hame?"

- 6 "The brown bride she has houses and land,
And Annie she has nane;
Sae on my blessing, my auld son,
Bring ye Brown Bride hane."
- 7 Then he is to his mother's bouer,
And tirl'd at the pin;
Then up and rose his mother dear
To let sweet Willie in.
- 8 "Come riddle us, riddle us, mother dear,
Yea baith o us into ane;
Whether sall I marry Fair Annie,
Or bring the brown bride hame?"
- 9 "The brown bride she has gowd and gear,
Fair Annie she has nane;
And for my blessing, my auld son,
Bring ye Brown Bride hame."
- 10 Then he is to his sister's bouer,
And tirl'd at the pin;
And wha sae ready as his sister dear
To let her brither in.
- 11 "Come riddle us, riddle us, sister fair,
Us baith yea into ane;
Whether sall I marry Fair Annie,
Or bring the brown bride hame?"
- 12 "The brown bride she has horse and kye,
And Annie she ha nane;
But for my love, my brither dear,
Bring hame the fair woman.
- 13 "Your horse may dee into the staw,
The kye into the byre,
And ye'll hae nocht but a howther o dirt,
To feed about your fire"
- 14 Then he is to Fair Annie's bouer,
And tirl'd at the pin;
And wha sae ready as Fair Annie
To let Sweet Willie in.

This first section consists of a series of circular repetitions which start with the arrival at a relative's door and the opening to let Sweet William in. He then asks the same question of all the members of his family and they give the same answer. Thus

the two cycles for mother and father are essentially the same with few words changed to personalise the differences. The visit to the sister's house proceeds in the same manner until the answer section. The sister gives good advice starting with the same acknowledgement as her parents that the brown bride is wealthy but, in contrast, pointing out that such things are transitory and recommending that Willie marry Fair Annie. Versions A and E then have a stanza where Willie says he will follow his mother's advice and wed the brown bride. The text I show here (version B) lacks this stanza but it is easily inferred.

Andersen has analysed these repetitive answering verses and finds that the stanzas consistently follow a pattern where the first line is exclamatory; the second provides "the speaker's assessment" of the situation; this is juxtaposed with line three and rounded off with the final advice in line four. For Andersen, the finest line is the third where the differences between the family members are exposed (Andersen et al., 1982:50). Also noted in this section are the constant uses of "delaying repetitions" such as those of verse 8 ,

"Come riddle us, riddle us, mother dear,
Yea baith o us into ane:"

This type of 'lingering' appears constantly in this ballad and will be mentioned as it occurs.

Willie has made up his mind and this leads to an official declaration of intentions. There is a radical difference here between the two ballads. In the Faroese text, it is the woman who inquires about her partner's wedding plans – which are obviously expected. It is not clear, however, whether the lady actually expects that her Peter has in mind marriage to somebody else. In the Scottish text, Willie is well aware that what he is about to say will not be welcomed by Annie. Annie is indeed bitter and claims that she should have been the bride. Kirstin, on the other hand, claims only an invitation to the wedding no matter how distant it might be.

15 "You're welcome here to me, Willie,
You're welcome here to me;"
"I'm na welcome to thee, Annie,
I'm na welcome to thee,
For I'm come to bid ye to my wedding,
It's gey sad news to thee."

2 "Harra Pætur, sig mær pá tín trú,
nær vilt tú lata títt brúðleyp bó?"
["Peter, tell me truly,
won't you soon invite
guests to your wedding?"]

- 3 "Mítt brúðleyp stendur so langt av
land,
har kemur ikki til hvørki kvinna ella
man."
["My wedding takes place
so far away,
that no man or woman
will come there."]
- 16 It's gey sad news to me, Willie,
The saddest ye could tell;
It's gey sad news to me, Willie,
That should been bride mysel."
- 4 "Um enn títt brúðleyp stóð í Róm,
beyðst tú mær, so skyldi eg komið."
["Even if your marriage
takes place in Rome,
if you invite me, I should
come."]

The reason for the extended length of the 15th verse is not clear.¹ Annie is not sure about attending the wedding and seeks advice from her father. He advises against it but she decides to go. Once again there is use of the delaying repetitions mentioned above and the same structure of the reply.

- 17 Then she is to her father gane,
And bowed low on her knee:
... ..
... ..
- 18 "Come riddle us, riddle us, father dear,
Us baith yea into ane;
Whether sall I gang to Willie's wedding,
Or sall I stay at hame?"
- 19 "Whare ane will be your frien, Annie,
Twenty will be your fae;"
"But prove it gude, or prove it bad,
To Willie's wedding I'll gae.

Both ladies decide that they will present as impressive a picture of themselves as possible. In the case of Kirstin, this is despite her partner's request that she leave off all the gold ornaments that he, presumably, has given her. She determines, however, to wear her gold with pride. Annie also seeks to have special clothes for the journey, a scarlet dress for the event and to have her hair covered in gold. Each also prepares her horse for the journey although the trappings on the Scottish horse are by far the more detailed and elaborate. It is unusual that a description in a Scottish text should be longer than a similar section in the Faroese. This situation concerning Fair Annie's preparations is not logical. Gummere sums it up most succinctly when he observes that Fair Annie is set aside for her poverty and then goes to the wedding with symbols of

conventional affluence (Gummere, 1907:307). Logic is set aside; fair ladies should appear to their greatest advantage. One explanation of this might be, as Toelken explains, that the text is actually more dramatic than narrational and that such pieces use evocative images and metaphors to help create the "climactic moment and the shared experience of trauma rather than the details of a coherent story" (Toelken, 1995:15).

- | | |
|---|---|
| | 5 "Skalt tú til mítt brúðleyp fara,
títt reyðargull mást tú eftir lata vera."
["If you come to my wedding,
you must leave your red-gold
(ornaments) behind."] |
| 20 "I'll na put on the grisly black,
Nor yet the dowie green,
But I'll put on a scarlet robe,
To sheen like onie queen." | 6 "Mítt reyðargull kann eg væl bera,
eg fekk tað fyrri onga vanæru."
["I can certainly wear my gold,
I got it without any
dishonour."] |
| 21 She's ordered the smiths to the smithy,
To shoe her a riding steed;

She has ordered the tailors to her bouer,
To dress her a riding weed. | 7 Harra Pætur letur sítt brúðleyp bø.
lítín Kirstin hon letur sín gangara
skø.
[Peter announced his wedding,
young Kirstin had her horse
shod.] |
| 22 She has calld her maries to her bour,
To lay gowd on her hair;
"Whare e'er ye put æ plait before,
See ye lay ten times mair." | |
| 23 The steed Fair Annie rade upon,
He bounded like the wind;
Wi silver he was shod before,
Wi burning gowd behind. | |
| 24 And four and twenty siller bells
Were tiëd til his mane;
Wi æ blast o the norland wind
They tinkled ane by ane. | |

The ladies arrive at their destinations. There is a friendly reception for Kirstin by her partner Peter who then escorts her to the centre of activity. She then decks herself in all her finery and goes forward to act as a servant. The young bride is impressed but very disconcerted to discover that Kirstin is the mistress of her husband-to-be and wonders why Peter should have bothered to come seeking another woman. The

implication would appear to be that Peter should have married his mistress. There is no such friendly reception for Annie although she immediately impresses all who see her.

25 And when she cam unto the place,
And lichted on the green,
Ilka ane that did her see
Thought that she was a queen.

8 Lítin Kirstin kom har ríðandi í garð
úti stóð harra Pætur, sveiptur í már.
[Young Kirstin arrived at the
estate on horseback,
Peter stood out in front,
wrapped in martin.]

9 Hann sló yvir hana skarlakins skinn,
og fylgdi henni so í høgaloft inn.
[Peter draped her with a scarlet
cloak,
and escorted her thus into a high
hall.]

10 Lítin Kirstin tekur fram sítt
reyðargull
hvønn sín fingur setti hon full.
[Young Kirstin took out her red-
gold (ornaments),
with which her finger(s) covered
her fully.]

11 Hon setti høvuðgull á so prúd,
so gekk hon at skeinkja for tann
unga brúd.
[She put on a gold crown so
proudly,
then went out to serve drinks
for the young bride.]

12 Brúðurin talar til terna fín:
"Hvaðani er henda, sum skeinkir
vín?"
[The bride asks her elegant
maid,
"Where is she from who
pours the wine?"]

13 "Hoyr I, kera unga brúd fín,
tað er harra Pæturs slegfrúvív."
["Listen, dear elegant young
bride,
that is Peter's mistress."]

- 14 "Hevði harra Pætur so vænt eitt
vív,
hví bað hann tá mín faðir um mín?
["If Peter had such a beautiful
woman,
why then did he ask my father
for me?]
- 15 Hevði harra Pætur so vænt eitt már,
hví reið hann tá til faðir míns 'gaar'?"
[If Peter had such a beautiful
woman,
why then did he ride to my
father's house?"]

Unlike Kirstin, Annie is not one to act the servant. Instead, she immediately begins to criticise the new bride and a nasty exchange between the two develops. Willie admits that he is in love with Annie rather than with the new bride. This, unsurprisingly, makes matters worse. Once again there are occasions of 'lingering' repetitions. An example of this is in verse 27 where the injunction to "haud your tongue", is followed in the next line by "Wi your talk let me abee;" and another in verse 28 where the brown bride has two lines indicating that she was speaking out. Verses 28 and 30 also run in parallel with the brown bride asking questions of Annie and she, in turn, answers in matching stanzas. Andersen proposes that this constant use of the binary structure is used to emphasise the choice between two girls (Andersen et al., 1982:52).

- 26 "Is this your bride, Sweet Willie?" she said,
"I think she's wonderous wan;
Ye might have had as fair a bride
As eer the sun sheend on."
- 27 "O haud your tongue, Fair Annie," he said,
"Wi your talk let me abee;
For better I loe your little finger
Than the brown bride's haill bodie."
- 28 Then out and spak the nut brown bride,
And she spak out of spite:
"O whare gat ye the water, Annie,
That washed your face sae white?"
- 29 "O I gat een the water," quo she,
"Whare ye will neer get nane;
It's I gat een the water," quo she,
"Aneath yon marble stane."

- 30 Then out and spak the nut-brown bride,
 And she spak out again:
 "O whare gat ye the claith, Annie,
 That dried your face sae clean?"
- 31 "O I gat een the claith," quo she,
 "Whare ye will neer get nane;
 It's I gat een the claith," quo she,
 "Aneath yon bouer of bane."

Kirstin continues in her non-combatant role. When it is time for bed, she conducts the bride to the bedroom and assists in undressing her. She then wishes the bride and the groom a good night.

- 16 Síðla um aftanin døggin fell á,
 unga brúður lystir til seingjar at gá.
 [Late in the evening, the dew fell,
 the young bride wished to go
 to bed.]
- 17 Fylgdu tey brúður í brúðarhús,
 fram gekk lítin Kirstin, bar fyrri henni
 blús.
 [They accompanied the bride to
 the bridal house,
 forward went young Kirstin
 carrying a torch before her.]
- 18 Settu tey brúður á songarstokk,
 og sjálv lítin Kirstin dró av henni
 sokk.
 [They set the bride on the edge
 of the bed,
 and young Kirstin herself
 took off her stockings.]
- 19 Settu tey brúður í seingina góð,
 og sjálvur harra Pætur tók ímót.
 [They placed the bride well
 onto the bed,
 and Peter himself welcomed her.]
- 20 Lítin Kirstin læt hurðina aftur brátt,
 hon segði teim báðum túsund góða
 nátt.
 [Young Kirstin closed the door
 a short time later,
 she wished them both a
 thousand good nights.]

This now leads to the death of the 'wronged' ladies. In the case of Kirstin, she simply goes to the orchard and commits suicide by hanging herself. The Scottish text, however, follows a different path. Here, the brown bride murders the insult-giving mistress by stabbing her with a penknife. This is curiously reminiscent of the case of *Clerk Colvill* where Colvill reacts to the machinations of the mermaid by attempting to stab her with a penknife – in contrast to the Faroese text where there is only calm acceptance of the situation.² The news is broken to the men in different ways. Willie does not observe what has happened to Annie and asks her what is wrong. She prolongs the moment by answering in a repetition – asking whether he is blind or whether he will not see. Peter is in bed when the message of Kirstin's death is given to him.

32 The brown bride had a little penknife,
Which she kept secret there;
She stabbed Fair Anie to the heart,
A deep wound and sair.

21 Lítin Kirstin hon gongur í
Abildagaar',
hon hongdi seg við sítt gula hár.
[Young Kirstin went into the
apple orchard,
hanged herself by her golden
hair.]

33 It's out and spak he Sweet Willie,
And he spak yet again:
"O what's the matter wi thee, Annie,
That ye do look so wan?"

22 So snart kom boð till harra Pætur
ein,
lítin Kirstin hongur deyð á
apildagrein.
[Shortly after a messenger came
to Peter,
young Kirstin hung dead on an
apple branch.]

34 "Oh are ye blind, Willie?" she said,
"Or do ye no well see?
I think ye micht see my heart' blude,
Come rinning by my knee."

Both men take hold of a sword. Willie kills the brown bride and then commits suicide. Peter, in contrast, leaves his bride be and ends his own life. The bride, however, is also dead by the morning presumably also by her own hand. Thus the Faroese text is concerned with three suicides while the Scottish text recounts two murders and one suicide.

- 35 Then Willie took a little sword,
Which he kept secret there,
And strak the brown bride to the heart,
A word she neer spak mair.
- 36 And after that a' this was dune,
He drew it through the strae,
And through his ain fair bodie
He cause the cauld iron gae.
- 23 Harra Pætur rýmdi av song við
harm,
og svørðið tók hann undir sín arm.
[Peter fled the bed in sorrow,
and took the sword under his
arm.]
- 24 "Nú skal hetta kalda jarn
loysa mína mœði og stóra mein."
[Now this cold iron shall
end my trouble and my great
wrong.]
- 25 Hjaltið setti hann mót ein stein,
men oddurin gjørði hans hjarta mein.
[He set the hilt against a stone,
but the tip injured his heart.]
- 26 Árla um morgunin, dagur var ljús,
tá vóru trý lík í harra Pæturs hús.
[Early in the morning, the day
was light,
there were three corpses in
Peter's house.]
- 27 Harra Pætur og hansara slegfrúvív,
–undir hvítan saðil –
hans unga brúður læt også lív.
– *Der mín gangari gongur
gjøgnum skógin.*
[Peter and his mistress,
– *under a white saddle* –
his young bride also died,
– *there my horse runs
through the wood.*]

Whereas Peter had briefly recognised the error of his ways and sought to right them by taking his own life, Willie philosophises at some length on the folly of marrying for such temporary things as wealth. The Scottish text ends with a formulaic section on the inter-twining of vegetation as a symbol of thwarted love. The ending of the Faroese text with the death of the young bride is also formulaic in a similar manner and is the same as was used in *Ólavur Riddararós* (Chapter 8).

- 37 The last words that Sweet Willie spak,
His heart was almaist gane;
"May never a young man like me
Have sic a sad wedding.

- 38 For gear will come, and gear will gang,
 And gear's ae but a lend,
 And monie a ane for world's gear
 A silly brown bride brings hame."
- 39 Sweet Willie was buried in Mary's kirk,
 And Annie in Mary's quire,
 And out o ane there grew a birk,
 And out o the ither a brier.
- 40 And sae they grew, and ae they threw,
 Until the twa did meet,
 That ilka ane micht plainly see
 They were true lovers sweet.

And so the ballads both come to their sad end. I wish now to turn to other ballads related to our sample pair and see if it is possible to identify those texts which bear the closest resemblance to our Scottish and Faroese examples. To do this, I intend to look in the Scottish and English traditions on one side and in the various Scandinavian traditions on the other.

One of the interesting observations made in Chapter 6 of this work concerned the relationship between "Lord Thomas and Fair Annet" and "Thomas o Yonderdale" (Child 253) and, similarly, the relationship between "Harra Pætur og Kirstin" and "Brunsveins vísa". As noted in the earlier chapter, the ballads are here turned 'inside-out' to provide pale, positive versions of the ballads in this chapter. "Thomas o Yonderdale" leaves his lover and their son and, while abroad, becomes engaged to marry another woman. He dreams of his old love, summons her to come and then marries her in preference to the foreign woman. In "Brunsveins vísa", the story appears to start at another point when the Faroese bride learns that Mjólkhvit is the mistress of the groom and not his sister. The bride then presses the groom to send her home and to marry his mistress instead.

If, however, we stay within the Scottish corpus, there are a number of different versions within the collection known as Child 73. Version A ("Lord Thomas and Fair Annet"), version B ("The Nut-Brown Bride", the example used above) and version C ("The Brown Bride and Lord Thomas") are all very similar in that the bride murders the mistress with a knife. The later versions are more complex and often involve the use of a "bonny boy" to deliver the wedding invitation to the mistress, and the later appearance of her ghost in the bridal bedchamber. This last indicates to the groom that the mistress is dead and he then foretells his own death although no method is mentioned. Some of the variations in these latter 'mixed' versions where the girl

appears to have died of grief are highly likely to have crossed over from the ballad "Fair Margaret and Sweet William" (Child 74) which Child lists in a number of English versions.

This ballad (Child 74) is yet another with a broadside background and has a story that is somewhat shorter and simpler. William marries and that night the ghost of Margaret comes to the foot of the bed and wishes the lovers joy – or causes the groom to dream of swine and blood. William then rides off to check on Margaret and finds she has died of sorrow. He follows suit and the ballad closes with the conventional motif of the intertwining plants growing from the graves of the lovers. The verses of this ballad (Child 74) and those of Child 73 are sometimes so intertwined as to make separation difficult. The first verse of 74A appears with 2 or 3 word variations as the first verse in almost all the Child versions of ballad no. 73. Child notes that versions 73E (from verse 31 on), 73F (from 27 on), 73G (from 24 on) and 73H (from 37 on) follow the pattern and much of the wording of Child 74. To complicate matters still further, Child 75, "Lord Lovel" (a ballad of delay rather than betrayal), also contains among its versions, verses that can also be found in Child 73 and 74. The divisions between ballad types may be by gradation rather than by sharp difference.³

This becomes even more complicated if we consider the version of Child 74, "Lord Thomas and Lady Margaret" included in the Crawford Collection (Lyle, 1975-96, 2:22-24).⁴ This starts with two verses concerned with Thomas asking his mother for advice concerning his choice between Lady Margaret and the "nut brown lass". His mother's advice is,

The nut brown lass has gowd and geir
 Lady Margaret has nane
 An for my benison Lord Thomas
 Gae bring the brown bryde hame. (2)

This is a verse that is integral to most versions of Child 73 and is in none of those gathered in Child as no. 74 (although these are, in fact, English texts). This Scottish Lady Margaret also has an unusual way of dying.

She flang doun her siller kame
 Flang back her yellow hair
 And she fell owt o the bouir winnock
 And alas! she neir spak mair. (4)

The ghost of this Margaret then appears and speaks in the same manner as in other versions (although delivered in Crawford's inimitable style)

I wuss ye meikle joy o your bryde Thomas
That lyes now fast asleip
I wuss ye meikle joy o your brydal bed
And me o my wynding sheet. (7)

The remainder of this text is similar to the other versions of Child 74 noted in Child. There are actually two texts proclaiming their relationship to Child 73 in the Crawford Collection (Lyle, 19975-96, 1:121-24 and 2:64-66). They differ only minimally from the texts in Child but the differences are interesting. In 1:122, verse 20, when Annie enters the church, Lord Thomas is carrying a red rose. He leans over his bride and places the rose on Annie's knee. The other major difference is in 2:66, verse 17, where, in an extraordinary outburst of violence, Lord Thomas decapitates his bride after she has murdered Annie:

Lord Thomas he had a bonnie wee sword
That was baith lang and smaw
And he cut aff the broun bride's head
And flang it against the wa.

There is no equivalent of this in any other version that I have seen. In addition, this particular version lacks the twining vegetation closing motif.

These texts are all intermingled but the overwhelming impression is that "Lord Thomas and Fair Annet" is well embedded in Scottish balladry and also has connections with ballads appearing south of the Scottish border.

As befits the timelessness of such love triangles, the Faroese ballad is also associated with a similar complex of related ballads – although these are *not* in Faroese. Many Faroese ballads have their closest analogues in Iceland or Norway. In this instance, however, there is, according to the tables in TSB, no related ballad in Iceland. The Norwegian version, "Leiti Kerstis Hevn" [Young Kersti's Revenge], (Landstad No. 67) has a unique fire motif that distinguishes it from most other Nordic versions. The few exceptions are Swedish and influenced by the neighbouring Norwegian. In this ballad, the abandoned mistress sets fire to the house and kills bride, groom and a number of others:

Herre Per vaknað inki för då, at login leikad i Åsalitis hár.

... ..
 Deð gjorde meg den störste harm: brúri brann inne på brúrgomens arm.
 Der brann inne öl, og brann inne mat, og femten jomfruger, i festum' sat.
 Og deð totte eg endá allerverst: der brann inne 'kons sokneprest.

[Hr. Per did not wake up until fire played in Åseliti's hair.

... ..
 What brought me the greatest grief: the bride died in the bridegroom's arms.
 In there the beer burned, the food burned, and fifteen girls who sat in the hall
 But I thought it worst of all: that our parish priest burned in there.]

This distinct difference between the Faroese and Norwegian versions would seem to indicate that the ballad contacts are not between the Faroes and Norway.

In a few Danish versions, the mistress sneaks into the house at night and stabs her faithless lover to death.

Liden Kiersten drog ud sin solffbunden kniff,
 saa for-raade hun her Peders unge lifff.

[Young Kiersten drew out her silver-decorated knife,
 thus she robbed hr. Peder of his young life.] (DgF 210B, 4)

This, in turn, appears to be a cross-over from the adjacent ballad DgF 209 "Stolt Elins hævn" [Proud Elin's Revenge]. This is the story of a Danish woman who stabs another, equally faithless lover to death in his bridal bed. In this case, however, the bride is spared because she spoke kindly of Elin. In the remainder of the Swedish and Danish versions, the action runs much as it does in Faroese with the luckless lady hanging herself in the orchard and the groom dying on his own sword.

The constant verbal echoes between the single published Faroese version and the Danish version B are quite noticeable:

Faroese	Danish
2 Harra Pætur, sig mær pá tín tró, nær vilt tú lata títt brúðleyp bó? [Sir Peter, tell me truly, won't you soon invite guests to your wedding?]	2 "Hør i her Peder! hvad jeg siger Eder, Naar vil I mig til Eders Bryllup bede?" ["Listen Sir Peter, what I am asking, When will you invite me to your wedding?"]

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>3 Mítt brúðleyp stendur so langt
af land
har kemur ikki hvørki kvinna
ella man.
[My wedding takes place so far
away
that no man or woman will come
there.]</p> <p>20 Lítin Kirstin læt hurðina aftur brátt,
hon segði teim báðum túsund góða
nátt.
[Young Kirstin closed the door
after her.
wished them both a thousand good
nights.]</p> | <p>3 "Mitt Bryllup det staar saa langt aff
Land
der kommer slet ingen Qvinde eller
Mand"
["My wedding takes place so far
away,
that simply no man or woman will
come."]</p> <p>20 Liden Kirstin hun gaar ad Døren brat:
Hun ynsked dem begge tusind god
Nat.
[Young Kirstin left suddenly by the
door
wished them both a thousand good
nights.]</p> |
|---|---|

and this would indicate a close relationship between the Danish and the Faroese.

TSB indicates that ballads classed as D233 – D258 ("Crimes of Passion") are dominated by ballads from Denmark and often without other Nordic analogues. It is to this tradition that the Faroese text is related. The Scottish tradition is quite different. The groom feels obliged to ask his family's advice in the matter of choosing between two women. The poor mistress is murdered or dies of sorrow after she has exchanged words with the bride concerning their relative degrees of beauty (which exchange is unknown in Scandinavia) and, in some cases, her ghost comes to the bridegroom (also not found in the Nordic texts).

NOTES

¹ Version E also has a 6-line stanza as its verse 25 – at a completely different point in the story. It would appear that some lines are missing.

² It would actually be interesting to look at a variety of Scottish and Scandinavian texts and see if there is any pattern of more aggressive retaliation on the part of Scottish victims compared to their northern neighbours.

³ Coffin (Coffin and Renwick, 1977:69) suggests, however, that Child 73 ("Lord Thomas and Fair Annet"), 74 ("Fair Margaret and Sweet William") and 75 ("Lord Lovel") may be distinguished in the following manner:

In 73 there is a triangle with 3 violent deaths; in 74, a triangle and two remorseful deaths; in 75 there is no triangle and two remorseful deaths. All three make use of the rose-brier motif, although 73 uses this theme far less than the other two.

⁴ There are another two ballads in the Crawford Collection that are also called "Lord Thomas and Lady Margaret" (Lyle, 1975, 1:146-48 and Lyle, 1996, 2:94-96). Both of these ballads, however, are versions of Child 260 which is known in Child under that name.

CHAPTER 11

CONCLUSION

I began this study with the assumption that oral narratives (specifically ballads) cross linguistic and cultural frontiers. Another assumption, based on the work of various scholars, was that there was a "special relationship" between the ballads of Scandinavia with those of the British Isles – and more specifically of Scandinavia with those of Scotland (Grundtvig, DgF [e.g. 4:873-874]; Leach, 1921; Entwistle, 1939; Parker, 1952; *inter alia*). It seemed to me that translation from one language to another is most readily accomplished where languages are closely related and in close contact. In the case of Scandinavia and Scotland, the width of the North Sea presented certain problems despite the record of trade, from early medieval times on, between the various countries involved. Such difficulties, however, might be obviated if a dialectical gradient could be established which would provide a bilingual area in closer contact with both language areas. The islands of Shetland presented themselves as just such an area.

The consideration of Shetland was not an original idea for it was promoted, for example, by Harbison Parker (1947, 1952) when attempting to explain the appearance of a mermaid in Child 42 ("Clerk Colvill"). Parker's idea found acceptance with Bayard (1945) and Coffin ([1950], 1977). The basis of Parker's thesis concerning this particular ballad, however, is not linguistic but rather the existence of water-based supernatural beings with whom humans conduct intimate relations. He did not expand this into any examination of the linguistic and cultural affinities of the Shetland Islands with Scandinavia. That is the basis of what I have done.

In the second chapter, I set out the geographic, historic and cultural situation in the North Atlantic area showing the common experiences of the Faroe Islands and Shetland. Both were colonies of the Viking Northmen. They were initially subject to the same laws and restrictions, many of the same influences and exploitations. They had shared a common root language (Old Norse) and the spoken tongue is judged by present-day linguists to have developed in similar directions (Barnes, 1998:16). Both languages remained in the oral category because Faroese was not generally written until the latter half of the nineteenth century and Norn had disappeared before it could be codified. They had shared a common culture, as was shown by some of Low's comments on Shetland life in the early eighteenth century, and the common difficulties of wresting a living from the difficult circumstances of the two archipelagos.

Political separation came at the end of the fifteenth century although little effective change gripped Shetland until almost one hundred years later. Chapter 4 attempted to show that this political division did not end contact between the two groups either indirectly or directly. Indirect contact through trade in Bergen, Norway, was still the common practice for a number of centuries. More directly there was contact in terms of smuggling, fishing, trading and, finally, military occupation. Through most of this period, facets of the Nordic culture survived in Shetland. The language died slowly at first and then with increasing rapidity as its utility declined. But enough survived so that modern scholars could be sure that, at least as far as ballads were concerned, Shetland had indeed shared in the Nordic canon. Part of Chapter 2 and all of Chapter 3 were dedicated to this point. The fragments found by Jakobsen were examined and the Faroese analogues presented and translated. The existence of an entire ballad ("Hildina"), even in the peculiar method of its recording, was a great gift. Much attention was given to the monograph by Hægstad which disentangled the text and put some order into Norn as an example of a devolved West-Norse language. "Hildina" was then set into its Nordic ballad milieu and similarities to other Scandinavian ballads noted.

In these first four chapters I have tried to give an impression of the vibrant life that existed in the northern islands and how it related to its Nordic neighbours. Shetland had been Scotland's bridge to Nordic culture but political change brought social and cultural developments in other directions. So I moved in the following chapters to include the situation in Scotland (as far as ballads were concerned) where the future of Shetland now lay; and to the direct comparisons between Scotland and the Faroe Islands.

A whole chapter (Chapter 5) was devoted to the manner in which ballads had been collected in the Faroes, in Shetland and in Scotland as a whole. More was made of the Faroese side because little if any of this material has been available in languages other than Scandinavian ones. This section on Shetland also revealed that there has been a severe lack of a singing tradition in these islands during the twentieth century and that direct comparison of Shetland and Faroese versions is not possible.

Chapter 6 dealt first with those ballads held by Mortan Nolsøe to be common to Scotland and the Faroes, and then considered several additional, possibly relevant ballads located through the analogue tables in DgF, TSB and Syndergaard (1995). A brief analysis of the indicated pairs showed that they varied from 'having some observable close similarities' to 'having little or nothing in common'. The similarities, however, all too often tended to be in general motifs (which is, of course, why they were rated as analogues in the first place) rather than in the details of the story. The

exceptions, "The Maid freed from the Gallows" (Child 95) and "Frisa Vísa" (CCF 129); "The Two Sisters" (Child 10) and "Hørpu ríma" (CCF 136) are not identical and are generally tied to their own area oikotypes. But they both follow a similar, strong story line and are buttressed by repeated patterns that help the memory. On the other hand, we have "Sir Patrick Spens" (Child 58) which does have a drowning but is not the same story as "Margaretu Kvæði" (CCF 77) and "The Earl of Mar's Daughter" (Child 270) and "Flúgvandi biðil" (CCF 127) which have in common only the motif of a man flying in the shape of a bird as opposed to a man flying with man-made wings. There were few indications in these short comparisons that there might be significant correlations between Scottish and Faroese ballads. The next four chapters sought such connections in a study of specific ballad pairs in greater detail.

Chapter 7 concerned "Babylon; or, The Bonnie Banks o' Fordie" (Child 14) and "Torkils døtur" (CCF 176). One of the interesting things about this ballad in Scandinavia is that it seems to be identifiable in two distinct types – East-Nordic and West-Nordic – and that the Scottish ballad is seen by Olrik as combining with the western form in order to create the eastern. The West-Nordic type appears to have existed throughout the Scandinavian area until the East-Nordic form, estimated to have originated in southern Sweden, moved westwards. This, in Sweden and Denmark, provided two layers of ballads with the older showing West-Nordic features. The Eastern, or "family tragedy" type did not reach Iceland, the Faroes or the majority of Norway. These areas remained the domain of the western or "legend" form. Thus we have a nicely interwoven, conjectured history but the fact remains that the Scottish and Faroese ballads belong to two different traditions. Any cross-fertilisation that may have occurred shows up in Sweden and not in the neighbouring domains of Scotland and the Faroes.

Chapter 8 looks at the popular ballad of "Clerk Colvill" (Child 42) and the Faroese "Ólavur Riddararós" (CCF 154) both of which have been judged to be versions of an international type named, by Grundtvig, "Elveskud". This ballad also appears to come in differing forms. Basically the ballad may be separated into three sections: the first deals with the encounter of the hero with a supernatural female who does something to him, for some cause or other, that brings about his imminent death; the second deals with the hero's arrival home and his announcement that he is about to die which he then proceeds to do; the third deals with the efforts made to hide his death from his wife or bride. Scandinavia and Scotland both have a ballad that exhibits parts one and two (in addition to which there are a few East Nordic texts that also tell a complete story). Other areas of Europe have a ballad that only has parts two and three. The major exception is Brittany where the ballad "An Aotrou Nann" has all three parts

and is often, for this reason, seen as the original. This has led to a great interest on the part of many scholars in tracing the 'route of dissemination' of the ballad through Europe from this Breton base. The reason for seeing the Scottish and Faroese versions as being particularly close is that both include an opening section with an interview between the hero and his mother and an indication that the proposed meeting with the supernatural lady is not happening for the first time. It was on the basis of such evidence that Liestøl (1909, 1946:16) saw Shetland as being the Nordic contact point for the ballad and Bengt Jonsson (1992:79, 87) felt that the path might well go from Norway to Scotland via Faroes and Shetland. And that routing was also used by Parker to explain the appearance of the Scottish supernatural in the form of a water being.

An analysis of motifs undertaken by Forslin (1962) indicated an unusual situation where the Faroese versions displayed motifs attributable to both the Danish (Scandinavian) and Breton (West-European) versions in almost equal numbers. This placed the Faroese version, in Forslin's reckoning, between the Norwegian version (which, like the Danish, is of the Scandinavian type) and the Scottish versions which display a series of West-European type motifs parallel to those of the Breton *gwerz*. An examination of the common motifs of encountering supernatural ladies, and of the initial confrontation of the hero and his mother indicates that these motifs are not uncommon in other ballads in the same or neighbouring traditions. The Faroese confrontation scene, in particular, was shown to be verbally reminiscent of a similar scene in the Norwegian "Herre Per og Gjödalin".

One way of deciding on the source of the Scottish versions would be an examination of any English texts that might indicate some trail back to a conjectured Breton source. Child found no example of "Clerk Colvill" in England. What he did find, however, was an example of another ballad – "Lady Alice" (Child 85), where Giles Collins comes home to die. In 1909, a ballad by the name of "George Collins" was recorded in Hampshire. Thus began a series of attempts to conflate "George Collins" and "Lady Alice" to produce a ballad that would indeed show all three parts of the putative "Elveskud" type. This, in turn, would show a path of ballad diffusion northwards through England, to Scotland and possibly beyond that to the Faroes. This discussion has continued ever since, albeit at a slow pace. In 1992 Bengt Jonsson rekindled interest when he supported the conflated version. He did, however, admit that he was anxious to prove that Norway, like a few East Nordic texts, had originally had all three parts of the story. The current writer on the subject, David Atkinson, is not totally convinced of the validity of the conflation and is anxious to develop new methodologies that might give a clearer idea of relationships (Atkinson, 1999b). For

my own part, I feel that Ólason was correct when he wrote that "a list of motifs of the individual versions of the ballad can give a picture altogether different from that which is obvious to anyone who confronts the texts." (Ólason, 1982:118). The Scottish and Faroese texts when placed together are not telling exactly the same story.

Chapter 9 deals with the comparison of "Young Beichan" (Child 53) with the Faroese "Harra Pætur og Eliniborg" (CCF 158). These are two interesting ballads concerning the course of events when a man leaves a woman to whom he has made some promise of marriage. He has asked the woman to wait a specific number of years before she decides he is not returning and marries elsewhere. The greatest difference between the stories is that the Scottish version deals with a man who has been physically imprisoned and abused in some eastern country. He is freed by the captor's daughter, promises to return for her and then fails to do so. She travels to London and arrives on the very day he is scheduled to marry another. By contrast, the Faroese version deals with a hometown hero who has an attack of wanderlust and forgets to keep his promise to return. Again it is the heroine who has to go in search and reclaim her recalcitrant lover.

The Faroese ballad is shot through with indications of deception, disguise and role playing whereas these are totally absent in the Scottish texts. Indeed, the deceptions are carried to such an extreme that one wonders whether they were really presented seriously. It is quite hard to imagine a lady and her maids passing themselves off as Jutland knights after having spent the period from Easter to November rowing and sailing over the North Sea. There is also a reliance on the supernatural (the hint that the hero was detained by "elfin" power) and on Divine guidance (in the exhausting sea passage) in the Faroese that is missing in the Scottish texts (with the exception of the two versions that involve Billy Blin). I have not mentioned the extreme differences in the amount of detail that each version delivers because that is much more a function of the length of the ballad – which was determined by cultural factors that will be discussed below. There is, however, a very interesting reversal in the point of view of the ballads. The Faroese heroine is definitely a liberated woman who can do anything a man can do – and especially so when her brother tells her that the open sea is no place for a woman. She takes charge of the whole operation, steps first on land (as is appropriate for the principal character) and marches in to confront the absent fiancé. This tale would appear to be told from a feminist point of view. This is not the case with the Scottish version where the heroine turns up exquisitely dressed and is submissively willing to go away. This is a contrast that involves a radical reorientation of the text and this is perhaps more than an ordinary linguistic transfer would normally entail.

An examination of other Scandinavian texts confirms Child's observation that there are few differences between the Nordic versions (Child, 1:459). The question of the origin of the Nordic form arises and we find that Grundtvig's claim for an origin in Denmark is challenged by others, such as Ólason, on structural and linguistic grounds although Danish influence is not denied. Scandinavian ballads with similar motifs also abound. The Scottish text, on the other hand, is often traced back to a legend concerning Gilbert Beket, the father of St. Thomas. Direct descent is highly unlikely but the influence is not out of the question. A somewhat similar tale can be recognised in the Scottish ballad "Hind Horn" although this also involves a further role reversal with it being the lady who is being married off and the lover who turns up at the last moment. It appears to me that both ballads are definite products of their own traditions and there is little evidence of the influence of one on the other.

Chapter 10 concerns "Lord Thomas and Fair Annet" (Child 73) and "Harra Pætur og Kirstin" (CCF 159). The common theme here is that only disaster can follow when a man abandons a much-loved mistress in order to marry for wealth. In both cases, the final result is that all three lie dead. Another interesting feature in common is that both can be traced back to broadside ballads in the seventeenth century. The story lines run in different directions although in this summary this situation is grossly simplified. In Scotland, all appears well until a lover's tiff calls up the hero's mention of his love's lack of wealth. He then goes round his family members in a series of repetitive stanzas asking whether he should marry his love or another, wealthier woman. The majority recommendation is that he should marry for money. The 'hero' then goes to his now-discarded lover and tells her of the plans. The Faroese situation is otherwise. The woman asks about her lover's marriage plans and is informed that he is indeed about to be married – to somebody else and at a great distance. In both cases, the discarded women unwisely decide to attend the wedding and arrive dressed like queens. The Faroese woman conducts herself in a 'correct' and submissive manner, assists the bride to bed and then goes out and hangs herself. When the hero is informed, he commits suicide and the bride dies of grief. This is not at all the path followed by the Scottish mistress: she criticises the bride in terms of beauty (a motif unknown in the Scandinavian versions) and is stabbed to death for her effrontery. The Scotsman then murders the bride before taking his own life. In some Scottish versions, the heroine's ghost may appear at the hero's bedside. This motif is also unknown in the other tradition. The sum total is then three suicides in the Faroes as against two murders and a suicide in Scotland.

A search for close parallels of each version shows that each tradition can provide them amply. Child 73 is only narrowly differentiated from Child 74. Examples

of this latter category, such as "Fair Margaret and Sweet William" appear to share many verses with the texts that comprise the Child 73 complex. The Faroese ballad, as befits the popularity of the motif of a love triangle, is also associated with other similar texts but these are not in Faroese. In a somewhat surprising turn-about, the closest analogues are not in the West-Nordic area at all, but are in Denmark and Sweden – the East-Nordic areas. The example given from a Danish text illustrates extremely clearly where the verbal echoes come from. It is obvious that the links of the Faroese text are to Denmark and there is virtually no connection with the Scottish neighbour. This supports Holzapfel's contention that while Iceland and the Faroe Islands belong to the West-Nordic area they show "the same double face of Old Norse heroic tradition and the late medieval Danish, the latter with its more Chivalric tradition" (Holzapfel, 1995:369).

It would thus appear from these brief comparisons that I have not established any particularly close connections or verbal echoes between the Scottish and Faroese ballads, and in each case the closest ties were found within the respective language group; the Faroese with Danish, Norwegian and Icelandic, the Scottish with English. This would seem to indicate that the language relationship is not the only factor involved – although it must play some role. I would like to suggest that the causes for the apparent lack of transmission of ballads through Shetland and the Faroes (in either direction) must be sought in the inter-related areas of a) function, b) the mechanics of transfer over language boundaries and c) the socio-political situation.

Function is perhaps the easiest of the trio to deal with. The ballad was, and still is, danced in the Faroe Islands. As a result, there was social standing to be gained for those who could commit to memory the lengthy versions that had been developed to satisfy the needs of the dancers (and also to fill the long dark evenings of winter). Indeed versions of the older ballads appear to have been elaborated in the Faroes just to provide lengthier texts. There was variation from village to village and dialect to dialect. Though these are now somewhat lost in the standardised texts of the CCF, they survive, fortunately, in the original manuscripts of the collectors. The familiarity of the audience with the texts, however, also limited the range of variation that was acceptable and limited the rate of story 'drift'. The revival of the ballad and the ballad dance in connection with the heightened nationalism and the related construction of an orthography closely related to the language of the ballads also played its part.

We have to assume that the ballad dance existed also in the Shetland Islands and the comments of Hibbert indicating the change in the style of evening

entertainments would indicate that this was so:

It was not many years before Mr. Low's visit to Shetland in the year 1774, that numerous songs, under the name of Visecks, formed the accompaniment to dances that would amuse a festal party during the long winter's evening.
... then would a number of the happy sons and daughters of Hialtland take each other by the hand, and while one of them sang a Norn viseck, they would perform a circular dance, their steps continually changing with the tune. (Hibbert, 1891:563)

That particular text then goes on to note that this situation changed in the mid eighteenth century when the words of the visecks were lost as the language balance finally changed from a bilingual to a monolingual situation – or at least to a language situation that did not include Norn. Thus part of the time period in which ballads might well have been transferred was a period in which the language matrix in Shetland was undergoing serious change.

As noted in Chapter 1, few scholars have tackled the problem of language transfer at micro-level. One of those who has made interesting observations is the Irish scholar, Hugh Shields. In 1968, he made a series of recordings in Glencolumbkille in the south-west region of the Donegal *galtach* (Shields, 1971). The songs were in both the Irish and English languages and Shields has interesting comments to make concerning the effects of bilingualism on the song corpus. He notes first that, when there is a state of bilingualism, the two singing styles tend to coalesce and the similarity of the phonology renders the language identification more difficult for the casual listener. In addition to texts in both languages, there are texts containing both languages and with origins on both sides of the language divide. Shields also observed the change as a song recorded as all-Irish in the 1940s had, by 1968, alternating verses of Irish and English translation – with the English coming first! (Shields, 1971:114).

More interesting, from my point of view, was the fact that Shields discovered that he dealt with a large number of "musical monoglots". He explains:

At least 21 of the 26 singers spoke native Irish; but only 10 of them sang in two languages. This means that 16 were "musical monoglots" of whom only 5 may have had serious linguistic cause. [Shields goes on to talk about the 3 out of 8 English singers who were] men who preserve some early British material – ballads and a mumming song – not found among the musical bilinguals. This material is, on the whole little touched by its Irish environment and it seems likely that the ballads at least can be traced to the Lowland-Scots enclave planted at Malinmore. "Little Sir Hugh", sung by a native English-speaker from Malinbeg, sounds Scottish both in text and melody. (Shields, 1971:114-15)

A somewhat similar situation, as regards Gaelic song, was found by Margaret Bennet in her study of the remnants of the Scottish Gaelic-speaking communities in Eastern Canada. Although her informants were bilingual they were often musically monoglot; songs tended to be sung only in the language in which they had been learned because "that is where they belonged" (Bennett, 1999).¹

I quote extensively from Shields because his is a valuable discussion addressing a situation that sounds very similar to that which must have existed on Shetland in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Singing traditions often preserve forms no longer productive such as the early ballad; but it may be that unproductive forms of language do not easily enter the repertory of bilinguals whose natural language is another one. A similar case may be cited in Irish. Not that my Gaelic 'musical monoglots' can be considered here: a number of these were people a little outside the folk tradition – school teachers among them – delving into their memories to oblige me with a song or fragment generally forgotten. For this example we must go back to the 1940s, when the Irish Folklore Commission recorded in Glencolumbkille the only sung – or chanted – specimen of a Fenian lay in Irish transmission. "Laoi na mná Móire" belongs to an older genre than the British ballads and one more akin to heroic poetry: from what we know of its singer, now dead, it seems to represent on the Gaelic side, as "Sir Hugh" represented on the English, an older stratum of monoglot culture existing alongside the bilingual culture we have seen. (Shields, 1971:115)

There are a number of important points in Shields' article and I would like to consider in particular the mentions of the concept of the 'unproductive' and its corollary, the 'productive', and the mention of informants "outside the folk tradition". Let me deal with the latter point first as this would appear to be a reference to those who would probably be considered, in von Sydow's terms as 'passive bearers'. They are able to recognise something they hear and are able to dredge up some of the material from memory but are unlikely to have produced it under normal circumstances. This, in turn led Shields to refer back to the 1940s where a surviving Fenian lay was recorded. The extinction of this (in oral transmission) with the death of its bearer brings us in turn back to the concept of productivity.

I am not certain how Shields defined 'productivity' but it might serve to consider it in terms derived from economics. Here productivity is linked to the concepts of supply and demand – and other factors such as cost and labour can, with a great deal of simplification, be subsumed in them. In regard to 'supply', the language balance in Shields' report is noted to be moving over generations from Irish to English. Irish is on the decline and those who were recorded as able to supply the oldest forms of the oral Irish narrative are no longer living.² There is a breaking of the old tradition.

Any re-invention of the tradition will be outwith the boundaries of oral transmission; there is no demand for the old and therefore the supply will not increase. The Fenian lay was unproductive as it had no remaining function.

The demand mentioned in Shields' article is very limited: even Shields found that many of his Irish-speaking informants had to search in their memories for items not normally in use. Shields tells us that some of these informants were outside the "folk tradition – school teachers among them" which information implies a contracting cultural base with class differentiation. The interests of the people are changing. There is little demand for the old, traditional, more complicated poetic forms of language and an increase in supply will not affect this. The old song and language is unproductive, it provides little that most of the later populations need or want.

Let me now transfer this simplistic model to the situation in eighteenth century Shetland. As in Shields' Ireland, the language balance has been shifting over a number of centuries and the old language is definitely on the lighter end of the balance. The situation differs slightly in that Ireland has had a recent official policy of Irish language education. This has brought about a familiarity with the language if not its actual everyday use. Most people are not the active bearers of the tongue and would seem to have surrendered to the active siege of English language media and entertainment encouraged by the Irish diaspora in Britain and the USA. Shetland, on the other hand, faced a Scots-English administrative language, limited education and relative freedom from an English language technology blitz. This meant that the decline of the language was slower and it lingered longer. But the fact remains that the demand for the old language decreased as did the supply. There was ever decreasing utility in its maintenance; it was not productive.

Shields mentions also "but it may be that unproductive forms of one language do not easily enter the repertory of bilinguals whose native language is another one." (Shields, 1971:115) In the case of Shetland this was most elegantly expressed as:

... the old words could seldom be translated into the new words and idioms without spoiling the metre and rhyme, and in their old form they became a burden to the memory and hard to understand. Many more have departed with the legends, superstitions and social usages to which they were linked, and with the decay of that spirit which gave them birth and called for them. (Robertson, 1957:3)

But this in turn brings us back to the question of function and its relationship to culture. For the singer of the Irish lay "Laoi na mná Móir" there was probably no occasion on which he could sing it. The long dark evenings by the farmhouse fireside

had given way in many areas to the electric light and the radio. Nowadays we also have TV, computers and video films. People expect a quicker pace of life and an evening long story is only acceptable on the film or TV screen. There is nothing new in this for the epics and romances were themselves shortened to ballads. In Shetland, the culture changed: the dance and its accompanying ballads disappeared.

[The new forms of entertainment involved evenings spent] playing at cards all night, by drinking Hamburg waters, and by Scotch dances. The reel, upon being introduced, became highly popular, and a few original melodies adapted to it, were composed by native musicians of Shetland, the most popular of which was the Foula Reel. (Hibbert, 1891:563)

There was apparently little room here for the ballad and that has left its mark on the continued lack of singing tradition in Shetland (Fischer, 1997). It also made it difficult for the area to pass along the ballads that it had learned from its Nordic past.

A great deal of what has been noted above has concerned the sociological aspects of life on Shetland. There is, however, a brief note to be added on the politics of the situation. Holzapfel noted that the East-Nordic features in Icelandic and Faroese ballads were due to "political reasons" (Holzapfel, 1995:369). Yet the colonial power that governed the Faroes (Denmark) was at a considerable distance from these islands and the mainland of Scotland was infinitely closer. It might be expected that *something* of the ballad tradition would transfer. But there are other examples that show that the cultural power of the political master is considerable even at a great distance. At the International Ballad Conference held in Los Angeles in 1993, Roger Renwick gave a paper concerning problems associated with the identification of a ballad found on the Caribbean islands of St. Vincent and Nevis, previously part of the British territory of the British West Indies. Renwick noted:

While American culture certainly diffused to the colonial Caribbean (especially through such channels as whaling and merchant shipping), British West Indian song traditions were more likely to have been influenced by British Isles song traditions than by American ones. (Renwick, 1995:346)

and this is despite the fact that the American continents are virtually next door to the islands while the British headquarters are indeed far distant.

All these factors of function, language transferability and socio-political change considered, we should perhaps not be too surprised that ballad transmission does not appear to have occurred from the Faroe Islands through Shetland to Scotland, or vice versa, however propitious the situation may have appeared. "Hildina" and the other

vibrant Nordic ballads came to the Shetland Islands when these factors were (or recently had been) united; they died, albeit slowly, when the systems changed. The ballads from Scotland and from Scandinavia (as represented by the Faroe Islands) that are indicated in the analogue tables do in most cases address the same theme. But they generally do so in different terms and in different detail. The existence of common motifs may be seen by some scholars as indicating a transfer over linguistic boundaries (Porter, 1985). But I consider that motifs which may appear in one ballad pair to link the two traditions but which are also commonly found elsewhere in each corpus thus must fail as unique link signifiers. These ballads do not appear to have travelled between Scandinavia and Scotland via the Faroe Islands.

NOTES

¹ An interesting sidelight on this is the comment by Nathan Rose on Jeannie Robertson's reciting "Mary Hamilton" in a Perthshire accent because that is how she had learned it (Rose, 1995:361).

² The situation of the surviving "Sir Hugh" in English is a little different because it is not an item in the declining language. It is, however, equally subject to the laws of supply and demand because it is an item being made 'unproductive' by culture change. A change of language will usually indicate a change in culture but it is not a pre-requisite.

APPENDIX A

Ballad

is well known and is evidently preserved by memory than any others
 is most fitted to the Genus of the Northerns. In this Ballad I can
 not answer for the Orthography, as I wrote it as an old man pronounced
 it and not could be afloat me in this particular. This man, well known
 being a farmer in Gutterom in Youlay, has the most knowledge of
 my point. he spoke of three kinds of poetry used in Norr and
 quoted or sung by the old men, the Ballad, for Romance; sup-
 posing the Vyse or Vise now commonly sung to dancers; and the
 third song ~~by~~ the account he gave of the matter, the first seems to
 have been valued here chiefly for its subject, and was commonly
 recited in winter by the fireside; the second seems to have been
 used in public meetings, now only sung to the dance; and the
 third at both. Let it be remarked that the following Ballad may
 be either written in two long line or four short line stanzas.

The Earl of Orkney and the King of Norway's Daughter
 Ballad

Pa vara Jarlin d Orkneyar

Jor frinda sin spur de so

Whirde an skilde meun

Our glas buryon burtaga.

2
 It vanna so idnar fuo

Tesa du meun our glas buryon

Here friende min yamma meun

Leo vildan slinde gede min vara to den.

3
 Yom heimis cullingin

Tro liene burt

esta vaar kon fruen Hildina

Kemi slu mer slinn.

4. 128

Toula.

1. What an year elonder

Ita han sadnast wo

An scal vara kunoë

Wo osta be sin rithin ridna das fro.

5.

Heme to Otkneyar Jarlin

Vilda muen sante maunast

I Otknian u bian sian

I bian far diar.

6.

An quë Dostriqn hedn quester

On de hin firsare juue

Tworore wo eder

whitrane hedn

7.

In himerin Jarlin

u klapape kildina

On de hedn quisto

Vult doch, fiegan vara moeth or fy din. *

8.

Elde vilda fiegan vara

Ty min u alt sin

Ans namne wo

So minyach u ere min here Otkneyar. Singe ro. *

9.

Ku di shall laga dor yochwo.

And u ria dor to strandane nir

u yilra fy minne avon

Blit an ear ne cumi e dora band.

10.

Ku Swaran Honign

So mege gar honon e onuthe

Whath ear di ho gane muer

I daute buthe

11. Tittle

Canas marked this⁺ seem to be confused some having too
much others too little to render the verse complete.

Foula

91
108

11. Trelli murkè vath ru goodle
 Da shall yach ger yo
 U all de vara sonna lip
 So linge sin yach liva mo.

12.

Hu linge slug an Honign
 U linge wo an swo
 Wordig vaar dogh muge soni
 Yacha skur fare moga so miorde yach arigan u
 frien vort wath common mior to landa. *

13.

Hu swara Hilege
 Hira geve honon seam
 Taga di gild firre Hildina
 Sin yach shall lega dor fram.

14

Estin whaar u feur felign
 Agonga hadn i slug
 Feur felign sin gonga
 Thadn i plug.

15.

Hu slinderin Jarlin
 U linge wo an swo
 Desse mo che Arkwar
 So linge san yach lava mo.

16.

Hu che legaran san
 Lot Honign fyrin din
 U alt yach an Hiltugin
 Widn ugare din arar.

17.

Hu swarar an frauua Hildina
 U dem san idre i fro
 Di sle dor a bardagana
 Dar comme ou sin mo.

18. Hu

* This verse seems to part of an intermediate stanza, perhaps to be placed between those marked 12 & 13.

Foula.

92
10

18. Hu Jarlin an genger
I vadlin fram
U hadnar sina onien
Gewon skoger i Orkneyan.

19.

Han u cummin
In u vadlin
Frinde jans lever
Vel burne muen

20.

Hu fruona Hildina
On genger i vadlin fram
Sy di yera da ou mar dum
Dora di spidlaiki minn man.

21.

Hu swase an kiluge
Ergo gevar a scam
Gayer an Jarlin frinde
Din an u fadlin in

22.

Hu fac an Jarlin dahuge
Dar min de an ongin gro
An east ano huge ei
Fong ednar u vaxthene more nes.

23.

Di lava onir pugna
Gist bal yagt fur o lande
Gist onir on fruona Hildina
Vath gode u faste lande

24.

Hu bill on hve da yalo
Quadrè bori u da hadn
Sina kløyn a bora de shall
Fon fruona Hildina vorka wo sine chelisa villyo.

25

Hildina liger wo chaldona
U o duhrar u grothi
Mon du buga till bridleson
Bontothu u dukka dogha.

26. Hu

Toula

26. Nu Hildina on ashar fyrin

Sien di gava meor live
 ou skuntha vin
 ou guida vin *

27.

Duska skuntha vin, u guida vin
 Tinka dogh she wo
 Jarlin an gouga here din. *

28.

Watha skilde lintha
 wo Jarlin gouga her min
 Klein minde yagh inga forlokhona
 Bera fare hera fyrin min.

29

Da gerde on fruna Hildina
 On bar as mien ot
 On muerin fast, figon
 Fysin u quarsin sat.

30.

Da gerde un fruna Hildina
 In bard im ur
 Hadlin burt sien on laghdi
 Gloug i otita jatha port.

31.

Nu ike visti an Hileuge
 Ihe os till do
 Eldin var commin i lut
 U stor u silthi sacht ans omo.

32.

Nu leueren fraon
 Hileuge du hereda
 Traun Hildina du
 Quemer live u gre.

33

So mege u gouga gre
 Strall dogh swo
 Strall lathi min heran
 I bardagara fwo.

34.

Bu buchtada lide undocht yach
 swo et sa ans begun blis
 Dogh easta ans huge
 I mit fureg u expomer mine ones.

35. Nu

Toula.

35. Nu tahti on hwe fweleko
 Ans be ead mild u steen
 Dogh shall alde min' Hworingrons
 Vadne vilda mien."

A literal translation of the above I could not procure but the substance is this. "An Earl of Orkney in some of his rambles on the coast of Norway saw and fell in love with the Hing's daughter of the country. As their passion happened to be reciprocal he carried her off in her father's absence who was engaged in war with some of his distant neighbours. On his return, he followed the fugitives to Orkney, accompanied by his army to revenge on the Earl the rape of his daughter. On his arrival there Hildina which was her name first spied him and advised her now husband to go and attempt to pacify the Hing. He did so and by his appearance and promises brought them ^{Hing} over as to be satisfied with the match. This however was of no long standing for as soon as the Earl's back was turned a courtier called Hluge took great pains to change the Hing's mind, for it seems Hluge had formerly hoped to succeed with the daughter himself. His ~~project~~ project took, and the matter came to blows, the Earl is killed by Hluge, who cut off his head and threw it at his lady which she says vexed her more than his death, that he should add cruelty to revenge. Upon the Earl's death Hildina is forced to follow her father to Norway, and in a little time Hluge makes his demand to have her in marriage of her father, he consents and takes every method to persuade Hildina, who with great reluctance agrees upon condition that she is allowed to fill the wine at her wedding. This is easily permitted, and Hildina infuses a drug which soon throws the company into a dead sleep, and

APPENDIX B

Translation of stanzas 1-12 of *Hildina-kvadet* by Norah Kershaw Chadwick (Chadwick, 1921:217-19).

- 1 It was the Earl from Orkney
 And counsel of his kin sought he,
 Whether he should the maiden
 Free from her misery.

- 2 "If thou free the maid from her gleaming hall,
 O kinsman dear of mine,
 Ever while the world shall last
 Thy glory still shall shine."

- 3 Home came the king,
 Home from the ship's levy.
 The lady Hildina she was gone,
 And only her step-mother there found he.

- 4 "Be he in whatever land,
 This will I prove true,
 He shall be hanged from the highest tree
 That ever upwards grew."

- 5 "If the Earl come to Orkney,
 Saint Magnus will be his aid,
 And in Orkney ever he will remain –
 Haste after him with speed."

- 6 The king stood before his lady,
 And a box on the ear gave he,
 And all adown her lily-white cheeks
 The tears did flow truly.

- 7 The Earl stood before Hildina,
 And a pat on her cheek gave he, –
 "O which of us two wouldst thou have lie dead,
 Thy father dear or me?"

- 8 "I would rather see my father doomed,
 And all his company,
 If so my own true lord and I
 May long rule in Orkney.

- 9 "Now do thou take in hand thy steed,
 And ride thou down to the strand;
 And do thou greet my sire full blithely,
 And gladly will he clasp thy hand."

- 10 The king he now made answer –
 So sore displeased was he –
 "In payment for my daughter
 What wilt thou give to me?"
- 11 Thirty marks of the red gold,
 This to thee will I give,
 And never shalt thou lack a son
 As long as I may live."
- 12 Now long stood the King,
 And long on the Earl gazed he: –
 "O thou art worth a host of sons;
 Thy boon is granted thee."

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